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Disarmament Commission

337th meeting

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New York

Chair: Mr. Drobnjak ..... (Croatia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

The Chair: I declare open the 2014 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC).

Before we take up the first order of the day, allow me, on behalf of all the members of the Commission, to extend a warm welcome to Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, who is representing the Secretary-General here today. His presence underlines the importance of the UNDC in general and Member States' high expectations of this session in particular.

It now gives me great pleasure to give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General to make an opening statement.

The Deputy Secretary-General: I thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the opportunity to open this meeting. I am indeed grateful to have this opportunity to address the members of the Disarmament Commission on behalf of the Secretary-General. I wish at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your role as the new Chair of the Commission. You indeed have important challenges ahead of you.

To all members, in particular those who are attending a substantive session of the Disarmament Commission for the first time, I extend a warm welcome to one of the principal components of the United Nations disarmament work. Key recommendations, guidelines and principles related to disarmament have historically emanated from this Commission. Even the Cold War did not prevent progress on vital issues of common interest. Yet as we meet today, the General Assembly still remains

> "[m]oved by anxiety at the general lack of confidence plaguing the world and leading to the burden of increasing armaments and the fear of war" (resolution 502 (VI)).

Those words were not formulated today, or even recently, but 62 years ago. They are part of the first sentence of resolution 502 (VI), which established the original Commission in 1952. The agenda therefore remains in part the same.

It is true that the role of the Commission today bears little resemblance to its original treaty-making function. Yet the concerns over trust and confidence remain. They continue to prevent collective action in the common interest on an extremely important component of the United Nations agenda. We are justifiably shocked when we note and learn that global military spending in just one day is almost double the regular annual budget of the United Nations. We are frustrated and disappointed when we face difficulties achieving the Millennium Development Goals, which are so important to millions and millions of people around the world, because of a lack of resources. As we all should realize, the world is overarmed and peace is underfunded.

We see the symptoms of that lack of trust and confidence all around us. We see it in the lack of nuclear disarmament or plans to achieve such disarmament and

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in the relentless drive to develop ever more advanced weaponry. We see such mistrust in soaring military budgets and in the lack of transparency in the armaments trade. The challenge that we face is cyclical because the very lack of progress in such fields generates further mistrust and additional mutual suspicions.

As a deliberative subsidiary body of the General Assembly, the Commission is eminently placed and is mandated to start what is a difficult but vitally needed process of rebuilding trust and confidence among Member States. There is no reason why that process cannot begin today, in this very room. Can we not find a way to build on some positive developments that have occurred in the past year? I think of the successful conclusion of the Arms Trade Treaty and of the increasing number of countries that have signed up to it and ratified it. I think of the growing global consensus on the existential consequences of the possible use of nuclear weapons and of the outpouring of innovative initiatives that civil society continues to generate.

As we know from the work of the Commission at its previous two sessions, each of the substantive items on its agenda presents its own difficulties. Members, of course, know that very well. Yet, can anybody dispute that progress in one of those areas must go hand in hand with progress in the other? They are clearly mutually reinforcing approaches to international peace and security. Together, they form the very heart of the notion of general and complete disarmament — a goal found in a dozen multilateral treaties and long recognized as the ultimate objective of the United Nations.

The skills most needed today are present in this room in members themselves. They are the skills of diplomacy, guided by the pursuit of common ground and a shared recognition that cooperation is more advantageous than polarization or confrontation. It is a win-win proposition. It is still possible for 2014 to be a year for the diplomatic bridge-builders of this world to carry the day. The alternative of a new dark age, where the originators of fear, mutual suspicion and hatred prove triumphant, must not be an option. No one expects members of the Commission to resolve every disagreement. Their aim must be to find and expand new avenues and common ground. If they succeed and break the stalemate that has prevented the Commission from adopting guidelines or recommendations since 1999, further progress elsewhere in the disarmament machinery may well follow.

As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated to the Conference of Disarmament in January, do not wait for others to move; be the first mover. I ask members to keep those words in mind as they now start their work. I cannot think of better advice for the United Nations Disarmament Commission as it enters its sixty-second year. I wish the Commission progress and, indeed, success.

The Chair: I warmly thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his statement today.

I would now like to offer some thoughts on the work ahead from the Chair's perspective and some introductory remarks.

I have the privilege to address members in my capacity as Chair at the beginning of the 2014 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). At the outset, I would like to thank Member States for electing me Chair of the Commission and to reiterate my readiness to explore all ways, to consider all proposals and to engage in any dialogue required in order to bring the session to a successful conclusion. I sincerely thank the Deputy Secretary-General for addressing us today, thus underlining the importance of the meeting and the agenda before us. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Christopher Grima, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, for his dedicated and tireless work as Chair of the Commission during 2013. I thank him for all the support and valuable advice with which he has provided me. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs for all its efforts and assistance.

This year's substantive session marks the end of the triennial cycle and is a part of our collective effort to advance global disarmament and arms control norms, thereby ultimately strengthening international peace and security. The session that begins today also marks 15 years since the UNDC has produced any recommendations or confidence-building measures. The UNDC has been meeting year after year. Both agenda items, in the nuclear and conventional weapons fields, have been extensively debated but no concrete result has been achieved since 1999. Those two UNDC arenas of great potential have too long remained unused. In comparison, from 1979 to 1999 the UNDC was able to adopt by consensus 16 recommendations, guidelines and declarations. Therefore, what is at stake at this juncture is the very credibility of the Commission. The

Commission now runs the risk of its relevance being eroded. We have the chance to prove otherwise.

Judging solely by the Commission's record this century, one might conclude that disarmament is not nearly as high as it should be on the United Nations agenda, but we all know that is not the case. The recent deposit of instruments of ratification of the landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by 18 Member States, thus bringing us much closer to the ATT's entry into force, is a case in point proving the continuing relevance of disarmament in the work of the United Nations. Furthermore, after our session, two important meetings in the field of disarmament will take place here in New York: the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Disarmament is high on the United Nations agenda, and there is a strong will among the Member States to continue building and enhancing global disarmament norms. The successful completion of a number of review conferences in recent years is testament to that.

At its sixty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted over 50 resolutions dealing with disarmament, approximately a dozen of which are on nuclear disarmament issues. Five among those were adopted without a vote, signifying that, on some pivotal issues in this field, we all share the same views. In that context, let me highlight resolution 68/25, on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty; resolution 68/26, on consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco); and resolution 68/27, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

We should try to clear the gridlock by rebuilding the trust in the common cause that was so elaborately described in the final document (A/S-10/2) of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted entirely to disarmament. We must continue to — and here let me borrow a phrase from the final document — seek security in disarmament.

Considering the importance of disarmament themes, essential proclamations need to be made repeatedly, no matter how obvious they might sound. It is important to emphasize that the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation continues to endanger international peace and security and that the prospect of them ending up in the hands of terrorists is a highly alarming concern. It is important to highlight the increasing need for progress in both conventional and nuclear disarmament; that disarmament and non-proliferation should go hand in hand; and that weapons of mass destruction pose a grave danger to us all, particularly in a world threatened by terrorists. Sometimes you have to emphasize the obvious if you want to move forward. Let us not forget that, for 15 years, the Commission has not stated even the most obvious things on the record.

Some might say that it is better to have no recommendations whatsoever than to produce documents of mediocre value with no new substance. There is certainly more than a grain of truth in that. But it is no longer just the paperwork that should be our concern — it should be the Commission itself and its relevance that are in obvious need of renewal. The Commission should, if not elevate, at least confirm its place within the United Nations disarmament machinery.

The Commission does not work in a vacuum and should be regarded against the background of the broader field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. On the other hand, it is useful to remind ourselves that the Commission is not a body that makes binding decisions, but rather a deliberative one. Its main strength stems from the fact that, as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, it is composed of all Member States. Therefore, its recommendations on nuclear disarmament and confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, though not binding, carry global authority. Meaningful deliberations under the Commission's auspices should provide a policy-effective approach in disarmament matters.

Last week, I circulated preparatory documents for two Working Groups, prepared by their respective Chairs: Ambassador Naif bin Bandar Al-Sudairy of Saudi Arabia and Mr. Knut Langeland of Norway. Those documents will be the starting point for the scheduled debates in the two Working Groups. I have all confidence that both Working Group Chairs will do their utmost in exploring the ways forward, and I invite members to support them in their important work.

As members can see from the schedule of meetings, our work this year is organized in a somewhat slightly

different way than previous years. After two days of plenary meetings, on 9 April, Working Group I will commence its work in two consecutive sessions: in the morning and the afternoon. Working Group II will start on 10 April. This year, the Working Groups will not meet on the same day, but each Group will have an entire day for its deliberations. Such an organization of meetings should enable more focused work in both Groups and enhance the prospects for their fruitful outcome.

Finally, I encourage members to come up with new creative ideas and proposals that could revitalize work of the Commission and provide it with more results-oriented dynamics. As food for thought, I suggest that we might consider the possibility of exploring ways for using the vast expertise of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). It would perhaps be beneficial for future Commission work to establish the precise modalities for UNIDIR involvement and the use of its experts. That would be consistent with the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Disarmament Commission for 2006 (A/61/42).

My final message is that I hope that in the next three weeks, we will be able to adopt concrete suggestions in both fields and finally provide the Commission, as a fully universal deliberative body, with much-needed results. A successful outcome of our session would send positive signals on issues beyond the items on our agenda and could spur progress in the disarmament machinery as a whole. I believe that the Commission has a valuable role to play within the United Nations system and I will try, with members' very much appreciated support, expertise and assistance, to prove it. Let me conclude by inviting members to contribute constructively in the coming days to our collective effort to find solutions that are acceptable to all parties.

Adoption of the provisional agenda for the 2014 substantive session

The Chair: Members of the Commission may recall that, at its organizational session on 20 November 2013, the Commission took note of the provisional agenda for the 2014 substantive session (A/CN.10/L.72). Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the agenda as contained in that document.

The agenda was adopted.

Organization of work

The Chair: As members recall, the Commission is yet to elect two Vice-Chairs from the Group of African States and a Rapporteur from the Group of Western European and Other States.

The Group of African States has nominated Mr. Bouchaib El Oumni, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations, and Mr. Isidor Marcel Sene, First Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations, as Vice-Chairs of the Commission. I have also been informed that the Group of Western European and Other States has nominated Mr. Peter Winkler, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations, as Rapporteur.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to elect Mr. Bouchaib El Oumni and Mr. Isidor Marcel Sene as Vice-Chairs and Mr. Peter Winkler as Rapporteur of the Commission.

It was so decided.

The Chair: On behalf of the Commission and the members of the Bureau, I would like to warmly congratulate the newly elected members of the Bureau and wish them success in discharging their duties. I am sure they will make an important contribution to the smooth functioning of the Commission. On a more personal note, I would like to say that I shall count on their support and counsel.

I would now like to draw members' attention to the schedule of meetings prepared by the Secretariat, which is contained in document A/CN.10/2014/CRP.1, As members will recall, the schedule was broadly agreed on at our informal meeting on 24 March. May I take it that the Commission takes note of the schedule of meetings contained in document A/CN.10/2014/CRP.1?

It was so decided.

The Chair: On a small point, regarding the rule for the rolling list of speakers, in order to maximize the time available to us during the general exchange of views, I propose that we maintain the practice of using a rolling list of speakers, which is currently open to all delegations wishing to take the floor. I would also like to remind all delegations already inscribed on the list to keep in mind that the rolling list implies that they should be prepared to speak at any time, possibly sooner than they had originally planned, because the list is changing as I speak.

General debate

The Chair: As we begin the general debate, at this stage we will continue with the list of speakers so far inscribed, and I again urge those delegations that have not yet done so to have themselves inscribed on the list as soon as possible. We plan to conclude the general debate tomorrow at 6 p.m., so we have, essentially, four plenary sessions for it. I would also like to remind delegations that we will as usual follow the established format for the length of statements, that is, 15 minutes for delegations speaking on behalf of groups and 10 minutes for delegations making statements in their national capacity.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Chair of this year's substantive session. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau and the Chairs of the Working Groups on their elections, and would like to assure the Commission of the Movement's full cooperation.

NAM stresses the need for concrete results in the Disarmament Commission's 2014 session, since it is the last of the current cycle, and urges all Member States to show the political will and flexibility necessary to achieve that end. While highlighting the importance of the discussions held in the last two sessions, the Movement stands ready to cooperate actively and constructively with all parties in order to agree on concrete recommendations on the issues on the Commission's agenda. To that end, NAM has submitted a comprehensive working paper on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation that makes concrete recommendations with a view to their inclusion in the Commission's outcome document this year.

NAM underscores its long-standing position regarding the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, and expresses its determination to promote multilateralism as the core principle of negotiation in that area. In that regard, the Movement reaffirms the Disarmament Commission's relevance and centrality — with its universal membership, and as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the multilateral disarmament machinery of the United Nations — for considering specific disarmament issues and submitting concrete recommendations to the General Assembly.

The Commission has contributed to the field of disarmament and arms control in the past, including by reaching a consensus on guidelines for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and conventional arms control. NAM regrets that the Commission has been unable to achieve success during previous cycles, due to a lack of political will and to the inflexible positions taken by certain nuclear-weapon States in particular, despite NAM's constructive role and concrete proposals throughout deliberations, especially in Working Group I.

We reiterate our deep concern about the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the nuclear-weapon States' own lack of progress, and we urge them to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals, weapons and delivery systems in accordance with their relevant multilateral legal obligations and the unequivocal undertaking that they made in 2000 and reiterated in 2010. NAM stresses that progress on nuclear disarmament and all aspects of nuclear non-proliferation is essential to strengthening international peace and security. In that context, we emphasize that nuclear disarmament, as the highest priority established by the tenth special session of the General Assembly and as a multilateral legal obligation, should not be made conditional on confidence-building measures or any disarmament efforts.

In that context, the Movement welcomes the convening on 26 September of the first High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament (see A/68/PV.11). The high-level participation and strong expression of support at the meeting for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons represented clear recognition of nuclear disarmament's critical importance to international peace and security. It also once again reaffirmed that nuclear disarmament continues to be a high priority for the international community.

NAM emphasizes that resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", is an appropriate framework within which to pursue the noble objective of nuclear disarmament. The General Assembly's urgent call, through the resolution, for negotiations to start in the Conference on Disarmament in order to speedily conclude a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, prohibiting their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and providing for their destruction,

has the potential to bridge the current divide and enable us to make tangible progress on nuclear disarmament. At the same time, it depends on the exercise of strong political will, without which no recommendation can help us overcome the current stalemate.

In the context of that resolution, the Movement calls on Member States, the United Nations system, civil society, academia, parliamentarians, the mass media and individuals to commemorate 26 September as the international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons through all means of educational and public awareness-raising activities with regard to the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination.

The United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament, to be convened no later than 2018, as decided by the same resolution, would indeed provide the international community with an opportunity to review the progress made on nuclear disarmament and to make concrete recommendations in order to maintain the momentum created by the High-level Meeting and to strengthen deepen international efforts towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. NAM welcomes the continued consideration of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, including at the second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, convened by Mexico on 13 and 14 February.

NAM emphasizes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and that, pending such elimination, all non-nuclear-weapon States should be provided, as a matter of high priority, with universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding security assurances by all nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances. The Movement underlines that improving existing nuclear weapons and developing new types of such weapons contradict the objective of achieving nuclear disarmament as a multilateral legal obligation and the commitments undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States in that regard. NAM reaffirms the importance of the application by nuclear-weapon States of the principles of transparency, irreversibility and international verifiability to all measures related to the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations and undertakings.

The Movement underlines the importance of the full realization of the inalienable right of developing countries to develop the research, production and use of nuclear energy, including the sovereign right to develop a full national nuclear fuel cycle for peaceful purposes without discrimination and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

NAM again stresses that proliferation concerns are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements. Non-proliferation control arrangements should be transparent and open to participation by all States and should not impose restrictions on access to materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes required by developing countries. The Movement stresses that issues related to proliferation should be resolved through political and diplomatic means. Measures and initiatives taken in that regard should be within the framework of international law and should contribute to the promotion of international peace and security.

NAM States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) stress the importance of fulfilling the commitments made at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Treaty and of implementing the action plans adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. NAM States parties to the NPT further underline that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which is an integral and essential part of the package of decisions reached without a vote that enabled the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, should be implemented without any further delay and reaffirms that the resolution remains valid until its objectives are achieved.

NAM States parties to the NPT express their profound disappointment at the fact that the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, due to have been held in 2012, has not yet been convened despite the consensus decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The continuing delay in convening the conference runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution. It also violates the collective agreement reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. They strongly reject the alleged impediments presented by the conveners for not convening the conference on schedule and urge

them to seek out credible assurances with regard to the unconditional participation of Israel and to convene the conference without any further delay so as to avoid any further possible negative repercussions on the effectiveness and credibility of the NPT, its 2015 review process and the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime as a whole.

In that regard, NAM recalls that, in the final document of the Tehran Summit of August 2012, the Heads of State and Government, while strongly supporting the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, called upon all parties concerned to take urgent and practical steps for the establishment of such a zone and, pending its establishment, demanded that Israel, the only country in the region that has not joined the NPT or declared its intention to do so, renounce its possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without precondition or further delay, promptly place all its nuclear facilities under the full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency and conduct its nuclear-related activities in conformity with the non-proliferation regime. They expressed great concern over the acquisition of a nuclear capability by Israel, which poses a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States, and condemned Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals. They also called for the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of assistance in the nuclear-related scientific or technological fields to Israel.

NAM underscores the need for a strong and genuine political will in support of the multilateral disarmament machinery, in particular in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, which remains the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

In conclusion, the Movement reiterates its full support for the UNDC's work, which should be intensified through reinvigorated political will in order to achieve meaningful outcomes so as to advance global disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Weisleder (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

At the outset, CELAC wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its 2014 substantive session and extends its congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. We would also like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Christopher Grima of Malta for his tireless work as Chair of the Disarmament Commission last year.

CELAC reaffirms the importance of the Disarmament Commission as the specialized deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the submission of concrete recommendations to the General Assembly. CELAC reiterates its willingness to work constructively to fulfil the tasks entrusted to the Commission.

The Community recalls the historic decision made by the Heads of State and Government of the States members of CELAC who, having gathered in Havana on the occasion of the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States on 28 and 29 January, declared Latin America and the Caribbean to be a zone of peace and reaffirmed its permanent commitment to resolving disputes through peaceful means with the aim of uprooting forever the threat or use of force in our region.

Members of CELAC reaffirm the need to advance towards the primary objective of nuclear disarmament and to achieve and sustain a world free of nuclear weapons. In that context, we express our opposition to the improvement of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of nuclear weapons, which is inconsistent with the obligation of nuclear disarmament. We also reiterate the need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies.

We express our strong support to the conclusion of a universal legally binding instrument that leads to effective, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament, in order to achieve the goal of complete elimination of all nuclear weapons under a multilaterally agreed timetable. CELAC Member States call for the earliest possible negotiation and adoption of a universal and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances.

While recalling the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, CELAC members reaffirm that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of

international law, including international humanitarian law, and of the Charter of the United Nations. Our Community reiterates that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination and prohibition.

Members of CELAC express our gravest concern at the enormous humanitarian impact and the global consequences of any accidental or intended use of nuclear weapons. We believe that the issue should be raised whenever nuclear weapons are discussed. We therefore commend Mexico for the successful conclusion of the second International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in the state of Nayarit in that country in February. We can upon all States to participate in the next International Conference to be held in Vienna in the second half of 2014.

At the time the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States was established, we confirmed the pride of our region by being the first densely populated area in the world declared as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which was signed in 1967 and entered into force in 1969. We wish to reiterate that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones strengthens international peace and security, as well as the non-proliferation regime, and constitutes an important contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to withdraw all reservations to the Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to respect the denuclearized character of Latin America and the Caribbean, thus helping to eliminate the possible use of nuclear weapons against the countries of the region. The Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) have been a political, legal and institutional reference point in the creation of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world. OPANAL's experience is also an important legacy of the international community for inspiring the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones.

CELAC regrets the failure to implement the agreement to hold the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction. CELAC strongly believes that, besides being an important contribution to the achievement of the goal of nuclear disarmament, the establishment of such zone would be a significant step in the peace process in the Middle East region. CELAC urges that the conference be held as soon as possible, as agreed by the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

We reaffirm the commitment of our States to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to the full implementation of its three pillars: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We also reaffirm the inalienable right of States to develop research, production and the peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Community also reaffirms the commitment of all parties to the Treaty to facilitate the participation in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

CELAC emphasizes the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and therefore urges States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear States. We also call on nuclear-weapon States to comply with their commitments under article VI of the Treaty and to advance towards the complete elimination of those weapons. We urge them to fully and immediately implement the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, as well as the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference.

The Community expresses its willingness to fully engage in the third session of the Preparatory Committee of the NPT Review Conference, to be held in New York from 28 April to 9 May, and chaired by Peru.

CELAC urges those States listed in annex 2 of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, whose ratification is indispensable for the entry into force of the Treaty, to accelerate their process of signing and/or ratifying that instrument, as a matter of priority, as a token of their political will and commitment to international peace and security.

Recalling the holding of the first High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, on 26 September 2013 (see A/68/PV.11), CELAC expresses its firm

commitment commitment to working towards holding a high-level international conference on identifying measures and actions for eliminating nuclear weapons as soon as possible, with a view to agreeing on a phased programme aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons in a specific time frame, banning their development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and requiring their destruction.

CELAC believes firmly that practical confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons play an important role in promoting understanding, transparency and cooperation among States and enhancing stability and security, in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with respect for their voluntary nature and for States' specific security concerns and situations. In that regard, it is worth recalling the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, which were adopted by consensus.

Our region has taken significant steps towards the implementation of confidence-building measures in the area of conventional arms, helping to enhance international peace and security. We therefore encourage Member States to strengthen, improve and broaden confidence-building measures at every level, as appropriate. In that regard, the Community welcomes all the transparency and confidence-building measures in the area of conventional arms that concerned States have already undertaken voluntarily undertaken in their respective regions or subregions, as well as the information on such measures volunteered to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures,

Our Community also reaffirms the crucial importance of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, recognizes its significant contribution to efforts in the area and stresses the need for its full and effective implementation. CELAC notes that the adoption in 2012 of the outcome document of the Second Review Conference of the Programme of Action establishes a clear goal and timeline for the international community to strengthen its efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons.

We reiterate the importance of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.We emphasize that work on the framework of the Programme of Action should continue, on a multilateral level and in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner, to ensure the adoption of legally binding instruments on marking, tracing and illicit brokering, in order to prevent small arms and light weapons from being diverted to the illicit market. We look forward to making progress on these issues during the Fifth Biennial Meeting of the Programme of Action, to be held in June, as well as during its 2014-2018 review cycle.

In reaffirming the importance of regional and international cooperation for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, CELAC has agreed to establish a working group to study the crime and to submit a proposal for a mechanism and procedures that would enable us to coordinate our efforts effectively and with full respect for international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter, so as to strengthen actions aimed at preventing and combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition for the sake of public safety.

CELAC hopes that the Arms Trade Treaty, the first legally binding instrument on the arms trade, will be able to contribute to an effective response to the serious consequences that the illicit and non-regulated arms trade has for many people and States, particularly through the diversion of arms to non-State actors and unauthorized users who are often linked to transnational organized crime and drug trafficking. We also hope that the Treaty will be able to help prevent armed conflict and violence, and violations of human rights, including international human rights and humanitarian law instruments. At the same time, in anticipation of the Treaty's entry into force, we urge that it be implemented in a balanced, transparent and objective way and with respect for the sovereign right of all States to their legitimate self-defence, in conformity with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The subject of anti-personnel mines still requires the attention of the international community. CELAC welcomes the declaration of Central America as a mine-free zone. We recognize the value of the assistance of the United Nations Mine Action Service. Our group stresses the importance of cooperation for demining and assistance to victims and hopes that the recent successes will continue. We support international

efforts to reduce the suffering caused by cluster munitions and their use against civilian populations, in clear violation of international humanitarian law. We also recognize and commend the wish of any State to take immediate steps, agreed on multilaterally, to deal with the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions.

In conclusion, CELAC reaffirms the role of the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and recognizes the renewal of the mandate of the informal working group, co-chaired by Ecuador, with the goal of producing a robust and progressive programme of work. We again deeply regret that the Conference has not been able to agree on and implement its programme of work. CELAC urges all Conference members to show the political will needed to ensure that it starts its substantive work without delay by adopting and implementing a balanced, comprehensive programme of work that advances the nuclear disarmament agenda, including through negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention, a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and a non-discriminatory treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that serves both non-proliferation and disarmament purposes.

The Community would also like to take note of the important work undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and its assistance to the countries of the region in implementing disarmament measures in various areas.

The Community regrets that the Disarmament Commission has been unable to make recommendations in previous cycles. It is important for the Commission to fulfil its mandate, as expressed by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We call on Member States to show the necessary political will and flexibility to make progress on our recommendations. CELAC reaffirms its readiness to cooperate with the members of the Commission in achieving concrete results during this session. The Community calls on all delegations to show the necessary political will to enable this deliberative body of the United Nations to fulfil its mandate and make substantive recommendations to the General Assembly.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): The Group of African States would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to chair the 2014 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. As you work to facilitate a successful outcome in this final year of the three-year cycle, you can count on the support and constructive engagement of our Group. We hope our deliberations on the two items on the agenda will achieve concrete results under your leadership. The Group expresses its appreciation to your predecessor for his efforts during the 2013 substantive session and for his guidance and excellent leadership. The Group seizes this opportunity to also congratulate other members of the Bureau on their election. In addition, the African Group wishes to thank the Chairs of the two Working Groups for their efforts last year and for accepting to continue their facilitation at this session. The Group expresses appreciation to the Deputy Secretary-General for his kind remarks.

The Group aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia and restates its commitment to the principle and validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The African Group underscores that disarmament and proliferation issues are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements.

It is also important to highlight the role of the Commission as the sole specialized deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery. The Group believes that, notwithstanding some challenges, the Commission has positively contributed, in the past, to deliberations on nuclear disarmament as the highest global priority on disarmament and on issues related to nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, conventional weapons and other confidence-building measures in the field of multilateral diplomacy and disarmament.

The Group wishes, in that regard, to recall the consensus reached on guidelines for establishing nuclear-weapon-free-zones and for conventional arms control. We believe that the political will and flexibility demonstrated to attain these past agreements will be visible when deliberations are concluded on 25 April and a new agenda emerges for a new cycle in 2015.

In a short while, Member States will begin deliberations and considerations on recommendations

for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. We remain confident in the ability of this body to articulate all concerns in order to agree on concrete recommendations. In view of this, the Group calls for flexibility, in particular in the positions of nuclear-weapon States, and promises support for constructive actions and concrete proposals in the course of deliberations, especially during the discussions on nuclear disarmament.

The Group reiterates the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba in 2009, which further restates that the continent of Africa is a nuclear-weapon-free zone, and we would like to assure members that our countries will continue to observe and honour that status. We again seize this opportunity to encourage States who have yet to ratify the Treaty, in particular the States contemplated in Protocol III, to take all necessary measures to ensure its speedy application. We believe that such action will significantly enhance the status of the Treaty and contribute to efforts to replicate this measure in the remaining parts of the world as one of the measures put in place to ensure a world free from the fear or possibility of the use of nuclear weapons.

On 26 September 2013, a High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear weapons (see A/68/PV.11) was convened here in New York. The overriding consideration behind convening such an important event was the need to seek a safer world for all and achieve security in a world without nuclear weapons. The Meeting was an opportunity to reiterate the highest priority attached to nuclear disarmament and to identify means of achieving progress towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

In that regard, the African Group also underlines the significance of resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", as a fundamental framework in the onerous pursuit of the noble objective of nuclear disarmament. The General Assembly, in that resolution, is resolute concerning the need for an urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer and use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

In the context of the resolution, the African Group reiterates its call on Member States, the United Nations system, civil society, academia, parliamentarians, the mass media and individuals to honour the commemoration of 26 September as the international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We stand to benefit from educational and public awareness activities on the threat posed by nuclear weapons to humanity and the necessity of their total elimination. The African Group hopes that the international conference to be convened in 2018, as mandated by the resolution, will constitute an opportunity to review the good progress made on nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear weapons pose a present and existential threat to humankind, and their use would be a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of human civilization and an aggravated crime against humanity. The Group considers any doctrine justifying their use as unacceptable, including threats to non-nuclear-weapon States by nuclear-weapon States.

The Group calls on nuclear-weapon States to consider the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and to take measures aimed at the voluntary renunciation and dismantling of those weapons. In that context, the African Group welcomes the past two international Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, convened in Norway in 2013 and Mexico in 2014, and looks forward to the third conference, to be hosted by Austria in 2015.

The Group calls for a deepening of efforts to truly address the threat of nuclear weapons and achieve the end goal of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) through their abolition. In that respect, we reaffirm the necessity of applying the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability by nuclear-weapon States in relation to nuclear disarmament measures. We believe that that is essential in order to promote the fulfilment of the obligations in article VI of the NPT and in consonance with the relevant multilateral legal obligations.

The African Group considers the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons and calls on all nuclear-weapon States to provide, as a matter of high priority, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States on the use or threat of use of nuclear

weapons against them under all circumstances, pending the total elimination of such weapons.

The African Group reiterates the need for the full implementation of the action plans adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which is an integral and essential part of the package of decisions reached without a vote that enabled the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995.

The African Group strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Group also reiterates its call to Israel, as the only country in the region that has not joined the NPT or declared its intention to do so, to renounce any possession of nuclear weapons and to accede to the NPT without precondition or delay.

We recall most vividly the consensus decision contained in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on convening, in 2012, a conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and express deep concern and disappointment over the failure to convene the conference in late 2012, as had been envisaged. In our view, that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. As we prepare for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, we look forward to positive steps with regard to concrete actions being taken to convene that important conference on the Middle East without any further delay. The African Group urges the unconditional participation of all States in the Middle East, including Israel.

The African Group welcomes the initiative presented by Egypt before the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly on 28 September 2013, which contained concrete implementation steps in support of the establishment of the zone. In that context, the Group also notes with appreciation the letters sent by States members of the African Group from the Middle East region to the Secretary-General renewing their support for making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The Group reiterates its full support for the successful conclusion of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects as a politically binding document that deals with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. The Group looks forward to the Fifth Biennual Meeting of States on Small Arms, which convenes in June and promises its full support.

The Group also notes the general support among Member States for the need to establish a common international standard for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. An unregulated conventional arms transfer system continues to fuel the illicit trade and unauthorized use of such weapons by non-State actors. In that context, the African Group welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty resolution on 2 April 2013

> "to elaborate a legally binding instrument on the highest possible common international standards for the international transfer of conventional arms" (*resolution 67/234 A, third preambular paragraph*)

The resolution should be implemented in a balanced and objective manner that protects the interests of all States, not only the major international producing and exporting States.

The Group also reiterates that the full and balanced implementation of the Treaty is achievable in practice with the cooperation of all. The Group reaffirms the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for the self-defence and security needs of States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The African Group wishes to highlight the efforts of the United Nations Regional Centres for peace and disarmament in terms of their contributions to disarmament issues. We wish to stress the need to further strengthen those regional centres for disarmament in order for them to fully discharge their mandates.

The Group anchors the success of this session on the strong political will of all, without which no recommendation can help us to overcome the current stalemate. We appeal for meaningful deliberations as we begin debates on the two major issues in the coming days towards achieving peace and security for all.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by adding my voice to that of preceding delegations in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament

Commission (UNDC) at its 2014 session. I would also like to assure you of the Swiss delegation's full support in the discharge of your mandate.

Switzerland hopes that the UNDC will make substantive progress in 2014. Over the past two years, both Working Groups have discussed a number of substantive proposals. It is our hope that at the end of this session, which will conclude the UNDC's three-year cycle, we will be able to report concrete progress to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. Tangible results within the Commission could have a positive impact on the 2014 session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

With regard to conventional arms, the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty will provide new opportunities. That Treaty is a major step for the United Nations system and its effective implementation must now be a priority for the international community.

In the field of nuclear disarmament, on the other hand, the growing gap between the progress needed in order to reach the goals that we have set ourselves and true progress is a major challenge. The international community is increasingly convinced that the potential use of such weapons could have devastating consequences, both immediately and in the long term. In addition, the tendency to underestimate the threats posed nuclear arsenals has given rise to important discussions. It is high time to unite around the humanitarian dimension, which is now well established in the discourse on nuclear weapons. It is important to use the positive dynamic of the humanitarian initiative and to continue our common work in order to step up accelerate concrete progress, in particular within the NPT, the Conference on Disarmament and other forums.

Furthermore, we continue to believe that the UNDC should consider ways to improve its working methods and to enhance its functioning. We believe that such modifications will serve as a useful base to revitalize the work of the UNDC as a whole. It is also essential to deepen the discussions on the composition of the agenda, that is to say, on the relationship between the work of Working Group I and Working Group II. For Switzerland, it is highly problematic to link the possible improvement of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms to developments in the general guidelines on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Our delegation believes that such linkages reinforce dividing lines and are a recipe for inaction. In our view, it would be wiser to focus on areas where progress is possible by launching multiple parallel efforts.

Furthermore, the Commission would gain by focusing further on specific issues rather than on generic themes such as nuclear disarmament or conventional disarmament. Beyond that, the Commission could also further examine the possibility of opening up its proceedings to exchanges with representatives from civil society and academia. Finally, the Commission could also review the structure of its report to the General Assembly so that it better reflects the substance of those exchanges.

The Commission remains an important part of the United Nations disarmament machinery, as it holds deliberations on specific issues relating to nuclear weapons and conventional arms. The guidelines and recommendations adopted by the Commission are testimony to its added value and should inspire further progress. However, for almost 15 years now, this body has been able to adopt no substantial recommendations or guidelines. Nevertheless, the deliberative role of the Commission can offer one way of overcoming the prevailing lack of trust and confidence.

We must note, unfortunately, that the Commission is not an isolated case in the United Nations disarmament machinery. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has also been experiencing deadlock. However, the picture is not as bleak as one would think, insofar as an increasing number of delegations are participating in discussions about revitalizing the Conference on Disarmament. Conference delegations re-established an informal working group mandated to produce a programme of work that is concrete and progresses over time. This approach to overcoming the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament is based on one of several innovative suggestions aimed at improving the situation. While concrete progress has yet to materialize, we believe those steps, as small as they may be, can be seen as a significant development. Indeed, they are in line with resolution 66/66 on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Finally, it is crucial that we overcome our differences and work collectively to achieve the noble goals of the Commission. The 2014 session of the Commission can make a positive contribution to achieving that ambition,

and Switzerland stands ready to contribute to those efforts.

Mr. Fernandes (Brazil): I congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission and express the full support of my delegation.

Brazil aligns itself with the statement by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Brazil believes that an effective multilateral disarmament architecture is essential to fostering dialogue and building confidence among States, thereby making an important contribution to peace, security and stability. The Commission is an important pillar of that architecture, as it provides Member States with a platform of universal composition to debate and make recommendations on various issues in the field of disarmament.

Beyond just regretting the fact that the Commission has not issued recommendations in the past 14 years, we must try to find where the real difficulties lie. Brazil believes that the problems that prevent us from advancing further are eminently political rather than procedural. Blaming the United Nations disarmament architecture for the absence of concrete results would be inappropriate, as it only masks a lack of political will on the part of many to engage constructively on pressing issues. We should continue to pursue the goal of issuing concrete recommendations by consensus, while drawing inspiration from past achievements of the Commission, which provide us with solid reasons to believe in the utility of the Commission.

To name only a few important outcomes of past Commission sessions, I would underscore the principles agreed to in 1988 on verification, which is a fundamental element of any disarmament treaty; the 1996 guidelines for international arms transfers; and the 1999 guidelines on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The latter has been of important political value to the development of such initiatives, including in regard to the desirable and expected establishment of such a zone in the Middle East. Those outcomes, which were certainly regarded as breakthroughs in their own time, show us that, with the necessary political commitment, we can fulfil the Commission's mandate. Agreeing on outcomes by consensus is certainly a challenge. The complexity of the task, however, must be an incentive for redoubling efforts rather than a justification for the status quo.

We must recognize that progress in nuclear disarmament has been clearly insufficient. Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the fundamental bargain of the Treaty have yet to be implemented. Brazil firmly believes that nuclear weapons must be completely eliminated and prohibited in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner, according to clearly defined benchmarks and timelines. That goal must be achieved through multilateral concerted efforts. The Commission could contribute to the beginning of the discussions on the principles and elements of a nuclear weapons convention, taking into account, inter alia, the 1988 guidelines on verification.

Brazil has expressed, on several occasions, the reasons for our conviction that the promotion of nuclear disarmament must be a top priority on the international community's agenda. In that regard, there are three main perspectives of a humanitarian, socioeconomic and security-related nature to be borne in mind.

Due to their catastrophic humanitarian implications, nuclear weapons must be eliminated as an urgent ethical imperative. We welcome the renewed debate on that issue, which was further strengthened at the conference held in Nayarit, Mexico, last February.

From a socioeconomic perspective, we regret that, 20 years after the end of the cold war, and even in the face of the current global financial constraints, large sums are still being spent in order to maintain and modernize nuclear arsenals. Resources that could help end poverty and finance development are still being diverted to sustain nuclear war machinery. When talking about peace and security issues in the post-2015 agenda, nuclear disarmament should figure prominently in our discussion.

With regard to the security perspective, as long as nuclear arsenals continue to exist, the world will never be entirely free from the risk of devastating nuclear destruction, be it intentional or accidental, and the longer a limited group of countries considers itself entitled to possess nuclear weapons, the greater the risk that other States and non-State actors will try to acquire or develop such weapons. We have agreed that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing, but have yet to give operational value to that truism.

As a party to the first denuclearized zone established in a densely populated area, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Brazil is convinced of the numerous benefits of these zones, not only for the stability of the region concerned, but also for the achievement of the broader goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. Brazil underscores that the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean can provide inspiration for the establishment of other nuclear-weapons-free zones. We stand ready to share our experience, bearing in mind the different realities and circumstances of other regions.

At the bilateral level, Brazil has proudly developed, together with Argentina, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Material, which is a successful model of cooperation and confidence-building between neighbours. Nevertheless, the fact that only 39 per cent of the world's population live in nuclear-weapons-free zones reminds us that there is no room for complacency. Brazil joins others in voicing our disappointment about the postponement of a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which should have taken place by 2012, as provided for by the 2010 NPT action plan. We support renewed efforts in that regard, and hope that concrete progress will be achieved before the next NPT Review Conference, which will be held next year.

One of the core functions of the United Nations disarmament machinery is to enhance confidence and build trust among Member States. Brazil supports multilateral confidence-building efforts in the field of conventional arms. We participate on a regular basis in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures.

We have also been submitting national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which contributes to enhancing transparency. We support the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and of the International Tracing Instrument, and we are looking forward to the discussions during the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms to be held in June.

Confidence-building measures at the regional level are also of relevance. Brazil and our neighbours in South America are strengthening confidence and enhancing transparency in defence policies, including information on military expenditures and conventional arms. The multilateral legal framework in the field of conventional arms has been strengthened with the conclusion and opening for signature of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We hope that, upon its entry into force, the ATT will help address the serious consequences of non-regulated trade and illicit trafficking in arms, including small arms and light weapons.

Brazil is ready, whenever it is considered appropriate, to engage in a constructive debate on possible agenda items to be examined in the next cycle of the Disarmament Commission. In our view, the work of that forum could benefit from a more specific thematic agenda. While we agree that the methods of work of the Commission could be improved, we favour a more comprehensive approach to the issue, which should be done through the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Finally, as this is the third session of a triennial cycle, we sincerely expect that the Disarmament Commission will be able to agree on substantive recommendations on the issues in our agenda. More broadly, it is our hope that the debates held in this forum will create a positive momentum towards the United Nations disarmament structures as a whole, including the upcoming session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to take place later this month.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2014 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as well as the members of the Bureau and the Chairs of the Working Groups. I also thank Ambassador Christopher Grima, the outgoing Chair, for his guidance in providing the firm basis for the 2014 Disarmament Commission deliberations.

My delegation also expresses its sincerest appreciation to Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and her Office, for the support provided for our deliberations. This year is the final year of a three-year cycle and we hope that we can demonstrate significant progress in comparison to past years. It is therefore crucial that we are committed collectively to making the Commission an effective entity of the disarmament machinery. Firm and decisive

outcomes are therefore needed to emerge from our two Working Groups so as to provide new directives for addressing the threats and challenges that confront us today.

While we focus on two substantive issues, it is equally important to improve the working methods and revitalize the Commission to implement past recommendations and serve as a platform for considering new ideas for the future. Trust and confidence-building on issues mandated for the two Groups are the fundamental principles for achieving our work.

In light of the several regional tensions witnessed today, focus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should gain utmost priority in the Disarmament Commission. Universalizing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are prerequisites, especially in the framework of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference later this month. The recommendations of the recently held Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague place an important emphasis on collective measures for ensuring non-proliferation, and ultimately disarmament.

This year also marks also the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). On this occasion, Kazakhstan hosted a workshop last month in Astana for Central Asia and other countries — 34 in all — and regional and international organizations to discuss how the resolution can be effectively implemented by the international community.

To guarantee the physical security of nuclear materials and equipment to prevent nuclear proliferation and terrorism, it is important to establish strong nuclear-weapon-free zones. We are pleased to inform the Commission that discussions are under way to finally sign the so-called negative security assurances for the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone. To ensure regional security, my country will shortly host a nuclear fuel bank or low-enriched uranium bank of the International Atomic Energy Agency, convert high-enriched uranium reactors to low-enriched uranium fuel, establish a regional nuclear security training centre and strengthen its emergency preparedness, response and mitigation capabilities.

We also call for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and Kazakhstan is ready to assist the coordinator of the negotiation process. To make the entire world such a zone, PresidentNursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has proposed a universal declaration on the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world, as the first step towards such a convention aimed at nuclear abolition.

My country joins the call for breaking the stalemate and reviving the Conference on Disarmament in order to demonstrate success at the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The world can ill afford to wait further for the drafting of the fissile material cut-off treaty, a convention against nuclear weapons and other key instruments. The five-point plan of the Secretary-General should also be an integral aspect of those overall multidimensional efforts.

Seeing the need to step up the goals of Working Group I, Kazakhstan has decided to make nuclear security and non-proliferation some of the key issues it will champion if elected to serve as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2017-2018.

Regarding Working Group II, Kazakhstan will work with redoubled vigour to ensure the robust implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The response of Member States in bringing the Arms Trade Treaty into force is encouraging. Kazakhstan is undergoing an internal national process towards becoming a signatory of the Treaty. In the meantime, we will continue to join the global effort in tightening regulatory and scrutiny procedures aimed at optimal accountability through enhanced confidence-building measures.

Finally, my country stands ready, with resolute political will, to support the international community in accelerating new momentum for the Disarmament Commission. Disarmament and non-proliferation therefore are among the key pillars today in establishing peace and stability based on the principles of international law, human rights and sustainable development.

Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Chair of the Disarmament Commission at its 2014 session.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States, and I would like to make the following additional comments:

Algeria considers general and complete disarmament to be crucially important to ensuring international peace and security, and reiterates its commitment to multilateral diplomacy as the core negotiating principle for the disarmament agenda. We reaffirm the central role of the United Nations as a universal multilateral framework for considering disarmament issues, as well as the relevance and centrality of the Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the multilateral disarmament machinery of the United Nations.

My delegation looks forward to achieving a meaningful result that advances global disarmament and non-proliferation through the current session of the Commission. In that regard, we would like to stress the particular importance of this substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, coming as it does at the end of the current three-year cycle. The Commission is expected to adopt concrete recommendations on its two agenda items, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms". As a State party to the main treaties concerning nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, Algeria reaffirms that nuclear disarmament remains its highest priority and reiterates its concern about the existence of nuclear weapons and their potential use or threat of use. We therefore believe strongly in the need for substantive progress in multilateral nuclear disarmament.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to once more stress the importance of universalizing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and of ensuring balanced and comprehensive compliance with each of its three pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Numerous States have chosen to use atomic energy for exclusively civilian applications, in accordance with article IV of the NPT. Indeed, nuclear energy represents for many developing countries a strategic choice for their economic development and energy security needs. Accordingly, my delegation would like to express its support for the legitimate right to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the non-proliferation regime.

In the certainty that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use, Algeria supports the road map proposed by NAM during the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11). In that context, Algeria welcomes the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 68/32, "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", and calls for effective implementation of its provisions, and in particular for the start of negotiations to speedily conclude a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons prohibiting their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and providing for their destruction.

In accordance with the NPT, Algeria reaffirms that nuclear-weapon States in particular should fully comply with their special obligations, and stresses how important it is that they apply the principles of transparency, irreversibility and international verifiability in all measures related to the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations and undertakings. In that regard, Algeria calls on all States parties to the NPT to implement the action plan adopted by consensus at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We also wish to stress the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in order to enable it to enter into force, thus contributing to the process of nuclear disarmament.

Since establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important step towards achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the entry into force on 15 July 2009 of the Pelindaba Treaty, which established a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa, represents an important contribution in that regard. Its example, and that of other existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, should be followed in the Middle East. In that context, Algeria would like to register its severe disappointment at the fact that a conference on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, due to be held in 2012, has not yet been convened. We call on the Secretary-General and the three sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East to redouble their efforts to convene a conference without any further delay. and stress how important it is that all States in the Middle East participate, in accordance with the consensus decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Regarding the issue of conventional weapons, Algeria supported the resolution by which the General

Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty. We believe that its adoption will undoubtedly strengthen the multilateral architecture in the field of disarmament. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues to threaten peace and stability in many countries and regions, particularly the Sahel, as a source supplying terrorist and organized crime groups. My delegation, which is deeply concerned about this illicit trade, reiterates the importance of full, balanced and effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and of the International Tracing Instrument. Clearly, international cooperation and assistance is essential in this area.

Concerning the issue of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, Algeria wishes to underline that in efforts aimed at contributing to international peace and security, such measures should be undertaken in full conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the right to self-determination of all peoples, taking into account the particular situations of those under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, and recognizing the right of peoples to take legitimate action, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, in order to realize their inalienable right to self-determination.

I would like to conclude by expressing the hope that all Member States will show the political will necessary to enable the Disarmament Commission to reach a successful conclusion to its three-year cycle.

Mr. Dehgani (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to begin by congratulating you on your election, Sir. My delegation has full confidence in your able leadership and ability to steer the work of the Commission successfully. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation throughout this important session, the last of the Disarment Commission's current three-year cycle. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election and to thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson for his statement.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We meet this year in the wake of the momentum created by the General Assembly's first-ever High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, held in September (see A/68/PV.11). The strong support for nuclear disarmament expressed at that meeting by political and geographical groups, national leaders and civil society, indicated how powerful and deep-seated the demand is for nuclear disarmament. It has shown once again that total elimination of nuclear weapons still remains a top priority for the international community. The follow-up to that meeting, the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 68/32, containing the three-point proposals made by the Non-Aligned Movement, represents an appropriate road map for reinvigorating and channeling all international efforts relating to nuclear disarmament.

We should take advantage of that momentum in realizing nuclear disarmament, which is a long overdue obligation and an essential element in maintaining and enhancing international peace and security. That fact reminds us of the important responsibility of the Commission and, naturally, the difficult task ahead of us in formulating a comprehensive and action-oriented document that lives up to high expectations, a document that, in terms of its content, can be considered to be above the resolutions of the First Committee and below a treaty, just as the Commission itself stands somewhere between the First Committee that produces resolutions and the Conference on Disarmament that produces legally binding instruments.

The Commission has a special responsibility in taking forward nuclear disarmament, first, because it is the sole specialized deliberative body of the General Assembly on all disarmament issues, among which nuclear disarmament has the highest priority, and, secondly, because the Commission has unfortunately never adopted a concrete set of guidelines on nuclear disarmament, as a result of the inflexible positions of certain countries.

The task ahead of us is also particularly challenging because of the issues related to political will. Although for over nearly seven decades the overwhelming majority of States have been strongly and consistently calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, some nuclear-weapon States continue their inflexible position in that regard. That has been the only challenge blocking efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament, including within the Disarmament Commission. Indeed, success will not be achieved without overcoming that challenge. In that context, we reiterate our strong call to those nuclear-weapon States to shoulder their responsibilities.

Nuclear-weapon States should comply with their legal obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and their unequivocal undertakings at the Treaty Review Conferences to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear weapons. Limited bilateral or unilateral reductions in and the mere decommissioning of nuclear weapons fall far short of the real and effective steps necessary for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Nor can they be a substitute for it, as the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons in an irreversible, transparent and internationally verifiable manner is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons.

It goes without saying that there is another important issue that needs to be addressed in the Disarmament Commission, namely, the importance of the full realization of the inalienable right of developing countries to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy, including the inherent right to develop full national nuclear fuel cycles for peaceful purposes without discrimination and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Taking the opportunity afforded by today's meeting, I would also like to point out the special responsibility of the three nuclear-weapon States that co-sponsored the 1995 resolution on the Middle East in implementing that resolution and the related part of the 2010 action plan, in particular the convening of a conference that unfortunately did not take place only because of Israel's refusal to participate in it. As the country that proposed the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in 1974, the Islamic Republic of Iran will seriously continue its efforts for the establishment of the zone. The only obstacles to that end are Israel's nuclear weapons and its persistent refusal to join the NPT. Therefore, Israel must be compelled to participate in the Conference, renounce its possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without any precondition or further delay and as a non-nuclear-weapon party and place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that if all representatives show flexibility and cooperate constructively, we would be able to overcome the aforementioned challenges. Therefore, let us decide together to safeguard our national and human interests, that is, to have a nuclear-weapon-free world, and demonstrate how able we are to make use of new opportunities to remove old obstacles. In its turn, my delegation stands ready to fully cooperate with the Chair and all Member States in having a successful substantive session this year.

Mr. Diallo (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal associates itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia, respectively. I offer my warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

Allow me also to warmly thank the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Christopher Grima, Permanent Representative of Malta, for all the praiseworthy efforts that he undertook during the previous session to make progress in the work of the Disarmament Commission.

Following three cycles of deadlock in which no recommendation was made, the Commission is launching this year the final stage of the three-year cycle 2012-2014 in a global context where the international community continues to encounter a great many security-related challenges. Stepping up our efforts, combined with strong political will, can lead us to come up with an effective joint response to those challenges. While underscoring the importance of the exchanges that took place last year, my country expresses the hope that the Commission will be in a position this year to adopt concrete recommendations on the issues on our agenda.

With respect to conventional weapons, whose proliferation was an important destabilizing factor in the Sahel region — my friend, the Ambassador of Algeria, just mentioned that point — we welcome the adoption in 2013 of the Arms Trade Treaty. Now, all that remains to be done is to work for its entry into force as rapidly as possible and see to its effective implementation. We would like to congratulate the countries that have already done so, and I would like to inform you, Sir, that Senegal has already launched the process of ratifying the aforementioned instrument.

Furthermore, my country backed a number of other initiatives in the field of disarmament and has committed itself to comply with norms established in the field. Accordingly, we subscribed to the Declaration of the Wellington Conference, which led to the Oslo

Convention on Cluster Munitions in December 2008. When it comes to small arms and light weapons, we call for a strengthening of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and, in parallel, the International Tracing Instrument.

With respect to nuclear disarmament, the hope that arose as a result of the success of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which was held in May 2010, and from the conclusion of the New START treaty, has, however, unfortunately died down, given the growth in the budget devoted by States to pursuing their nuclear programmes. Based on that fact, my country is in favour of the total elimination of nuclear activities for military purposes, which threaten global peace and exacerbate tensions at the national and international levels. To that end, my delegation believes that the following issues must receive the Commission's full attention during this session.

First, we must reaffirm our strong political will in order to curb nuclear proliferation.

Secondly, we must work for the universalization of the NPT and the implementation of its relevant provisions.

Thirdly, we must act with resolve towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the implementation of obligations under the NPT and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. Furthermore, it would be useful to take into account the need to negotiate and adopt a legally binding instrument prohibiting the production of fissile material, as well as to ensure a follow-up to the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), which was held on 26 September 2013.

Fourthly, nuclear-weapon States must reach an agreement on an irreversible, transparent and more ambitious programme to reduce their arsenals and, at the same time, provide security guarantees through a legally binding instrument to non-nuclear-weapon States.

Fifthly, the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones should be strengthened and new zones should be established, as stipulated in the conclusions of the most recent NPT Review Conference with regard to the convening in 2012 of a conference on the establishment of a nuclear-free-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We regret that the conference has not taken place.

Sixthly and finally, the right of countries to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to the effective and safe transfer of appropriate technology to States that fulfil their obligations under the NPT must be reaffirmed. Of course, the International Energy Agency Atomic will be responsible for overseeing all relevant modalities.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2014 substantive session and extend my congratulations to the other members of Bureau.

Ukraine reaffirms the importance of the Disarmament Commission and reiterates its willingness to work constructively in order to fulfil its tasks.

This year Ukraine celebrates one of the most important events in its modern history, the twentieth anniversary of Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and subsequently the signing of the Budapest Memorandum on security assurances to Ukraine. I would like to recall once again the fact that more than 23 years ago, immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine owned one of the largest nuclear arsenals in the world. There could have been great temptation for our nation to keep it, but we chose a different path. We renounced our nuclear arsenal. And we know that we have done the right thing.

Given the global dimension of those steps and taking into account the cruciality of the enduring problems in the sphere of nuclear disarmament, in particular in light of the explosive situation on the Korean peninsula, as well as the Russian military aggression in Crimea and the further escalation of the situation on the northern borders of our country, we deem it indispensable to redraw the attention of all Member States to the unique example Ukraine has been showing in the framework of the United Nations by remaining committed to the provisions of the NPT, despite the fact that Russian Federation has failed to fulfil its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum. Hereby we confirm that Ukraine considers the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and an essential basis for achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament.

In that context, we commend the efforts of States that have reaffirmed their guarantees for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and appraise their support and engagement for those commitments to be further fulfilled. We still count on those States because Ukraine never agreed to recognize the deliberate annexation of a part of its territory by the Russian Federation. In that regard, we invite everyone to participate in the round table on issues of nuclear disarmament and security guarantees for the States that voluntarily renounced their nuclear potential, to be held on 28 April at United Nations Headquarters in New York during the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Now, with regard to confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, to start with I would like to note that this is an issue whose relevancy has been confirmed by Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine. Ukraine remains consistently committed to the objectives of strengthening security for all, including through effective and verifiable arms control. As such, Ukraine welcomes all respective measures in the field of conventional arms past, present and future.

My country is a long-term responsible participant of such pan-European, subregional and complimentary bilateral confidence-building mechanisms relevant to arms control, such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Treaty on Open Skies, the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, as well as separate bilateral agreements on confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) with neighbouring Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Belarus. On 10 March, we signed an agreement on bilateral CSBMs with Romania. Regrettably our numerous proposals to enter into similar agreements with Russia were rejected by the Russian side under the pretext of a strategic partnership between our countries, and today we understand the true nature of and real reasons for that partnership.

Sharing dissatisfaction with the ongoing impasse in conventional arms control in Europe, which has arisen through the fault of Russian leadership, as well as with the slowdown in the improvement of the Vienna Document's CSBMs, my country, as is known, initiated during its chairmanship in 2013 of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) a discussion on the role that conventional arms control and CSBMs can play in a modern and future security architecture. The main goal of Ukraine's initiative was and is to create a future-oriented strategic discussion on conventional arms control and CSBMs without prejudging its outcome. While the discussions have not yet provided a firm indication as to the concrete next steps, Ukraine's initiative proved to be a timely undertaking and has already found support, including from the current Swiss OSCE Chair.

Mr. Aho (United States of America): The United States congratulates you, Ambassador Drobnjak, on your election as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission during its 2014 session. We offer our full support as you, Sir, guide the work of this session forward. We also thank Ambassador Christopher Grima of Malta, as others have, for his able stewardship as the Commission's Chair in 2013. Allow me to thank as well Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson for his thoughtful remarks, of which we have taken good note.

Before making a few observations about this year's session of the Disarmament Commission, the United States would like to outline its approach to the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held from 28 April to 9 May. The United States regards the 2014 Preparatory Committee as a further opportunity to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to reinforce our shared responsibilities to uphold it.

Heading into the third Preparatory Committee before the 2015 Review Conference, NPT Parties should work to preserve and build on the positive momentum of the successful Review Conference in 2010 and the 2012 and 2013 Preparatory Committees. Parties should emphasize the mutually reinforcing nature of the NPT's three pillars, and the fact that all parties benefit from the NPT and can contribute to strengthening it. We seek to foster a sense of common purpose by focusing on accomplishments and shared responsibilities. The United States will continue to fulfill its NPT obligations, and remains committed to full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference action plan. We encourage a balanced review of NPT implementation that addresses each of the three pillars and builds on the consensus achieved in 2010.

Turning to the topics on the Commission's agenda, the policy of the United States is to achieve the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. In

this, the fifth year since President Obama's Prague address on nuclear disarmament, we are working to create the conditions for the eventual achievement of that goal. We are sensitive to concerns about the pace of progress on disarmament, but, as the President has said, the path to zero will require patience and persistence. It can only be reached through concrete and progressive steps. Disarmament will not be achieved in a single negotiation or by setting artificial deadlines, as some propose, with a nuclear weapons convention.

We are also sensitive to the efforts to raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we cannot stress strongly enough that it is precisely because we well understand the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons that we have devoted time, hard work, and considerable resources in a decades-long endeavour to reduce and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons.

For subsequent steps toward nuclear disarmament, the United States remains committed to pursuing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and an international agreement to start negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). The United States is actively participating in the General Assembly's FMCT group of governmental experts, which began work on 31 March with a view to providing impetus for FMCT negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

We welcome China's hosting of the fifth conference of the permanent five in Beijing on April 14 and 15. This process is promoting regular dialogue among the five and can lay the foundation for eventual multilateral nuclear negotiations. We will continue to keep the international community apprised of this work.

Regarding nuclear non-proliferation, we encourage parties to the NPT to highlight the security benefit that comes from the commitment of non-nuclear-weapon States, as per the Treaty, not to acquire nuclear weapons and to accept safeguards on all peaceful nuclear activities. By promoting regional and global security and stability, effective non-proliferation helps create the international conditions necessary to achieving the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. Non-proliferation also provides a framework that promotes the broadest possible cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy in order to benefit all humankind. Non-compliance should be challenged and States should be held accountable for their violations.

Serious cases of non-compliance threaten the integrity of the NPT and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. All States should insist that Iran, North Korea and Syria return to compliance with their international obligations. The efforts of the 5+1 group on Iran offer an important opportunity to peacefully resolve one of the greatest challenges to the NPT regime. This has our fullest attention. NPT parties should encourage the full implementation of the Treaty's safeguard provisions. A key priority is gaining universal support for the Additional Protocol so that the IAEA has the essential tools for identifying possible non-compliance. With more than 120 adherents, the Protocol is an established norm. NPT parties should also endorse the Protocol as an international standard for verification.

We also draw attention to the important work being done to prevent terrorist organizations from acquiring nuclear materials. We are making great strides in addressing this threat through the nuclear security summit process launched by President Obama in 2010. Over the course of three summits, we have established a global network of experts who work on nuclear security at senior levels in 53 Governments and multiple international organizations. The trends we are seeing are very positive. The number of countries and facilities with highly enriched uranium and plutonium is decreasing, security at storage sites is increasing, more countries are prepared to counter nuclear smuggling, more countries are seeking international advice and the global nuclear security architecture is stronger. We thank the Netherlands for hosting the most recent Nuclear Security Summit on 24 and 25 March in The Hague.

In addition to arms control, confidence-building measures are effective elements in a limited toolkit for reducing tensions and preventing further escalation in a time of crisis. The crisis in Ukraine has demonstrated the continuing value of implementing transparency and confidence-building regimes such as the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Uilding Measures and the Open Skies Treaty.

I would now like to touch briefly on several other important issues. Although Russia's actions in Ukraine have significantly undermined mutual trust, no one should forget that even in the darkest days of the Cold War, the United States and Russia found it in our mutual interest to work together on reducing the nuclear threat. At the appropriate time, we will seek discussions

on additional negotiated reductions with Russia to address all categories of nuclear weapons, strategic and non-strategi, when conditions are conducive to further steps.

On the matter of the Middle East, the United States stands by its commitment to working with the other conveners, the facilitator and States in the region to hold a conference to discuss a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. We continue with efforts to arrange for a conference in which all States in the region participate and take a first step towards discussing this long-sought goal.

The United States is committed to the stable, sustainable and peaceful use and protection of outer space to support the vital interests of all nations. In that regard, along with Russia and China, we were pleased to sponsor resolution 68/50, which refers the recommendations contained in the report of the consensus Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (A/68/189) to the Disarmament Commission for consideration. The Group's recommendations on space transparency and confidence-building measures are an ideal topic for in-depth consideration at a future substantive session of the Commission. Specifically, the United States believes that the Commission should establish a working group on space transparency and confidence-building measures as part of its agenda for the 2015-2017 cycle.

Finally, this year the Commission is set to conclude its three-year consideration of nuclear disarmament and nuclear proliferation in Working Group I, and confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons in Working Group II. The Chairs of the Working Groups, from Saudi Arabia and Norway respectively, have left no stone unturned in their pursuit of compromise on these important issues, and we thank them for their sincere efforts.

Over the past two annual sessions, it is safe to say that the Commission has achieved at least part of its mandate — that is, to deliberate. We have pondered and sifted through a vast amount of information on often contentious matters. But if the Commission is to have any chance of fully meeting its responsibilities by producing consensus recommendations for the General Assembly, the time has come to act, to decide, this year. As my delegation has often said, even a modest consensus outcome on the nuclear and conventional topics before us would be better than no outcome at all. In the view of the United States, this is the realistic goal that the Commission should be striving for in these next few short weeks. The United States will do all it can to breathe a measure of life back into this body. We pledge to exercise political will to reach our goal, ever mindful that political will can yield results only when it is practised in good faith and approached as a reciprocal, two-way street.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

United Nations A/CN.10/PV.338

General Assembly

Official Records

Disarmament Commission

338th meeting

Monday, 7 April 2014, 3 p.m.

New York

Chair: Mr. Drobnjak ..... (Croatia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first, on behalf of my delegation, to congratulate and pay tribute to you, Sir, on your election to chair the work of the Disarmament Commission. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I would also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Christopher Grima, Ambassador of Malta, for his efforts during the previous session. With his ability and diplomatic experience, he laid the foundations for this substantive session. I would also like to thank Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for her presence and statement and her entire team for its work and dedication.

The delegation of Argentina fully associates itself with the statement made by Ambassador Saul Weisleder, Deputy Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/CN.10/PV.337). My delegation wishes very briefly to contribute some elements to our discussions today.

As we stated in previous substantive sessions, we should be able to identify measures that allow us to make progress in complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament and build confidence with respect to the goals of transparency, cooperation and peace that motivate all of us without exception.

The Disarmament Commission has not been immune to the crisis in the disarmament machinery. However, the deliberative nature of the Commission makes it the context where we can contribute to breaking the deadlock that has lasted for more than a decade. In that regard, we emphasize the value of dialogue in the framework of the Commission beyond the recommendations that it can agree upon at the end of the present substantive session.

For Argentina, the Disarmament Commission provides a forum of interest that should be maintained and substantively revived. We suggest the desirability of agreeing to a limited number of topics for the next cycle to facilitate new understandings and consensus among Member States.

In conclusion, we call on all delegations to join forces and adopt a pragmatic approach in order to have a fruitful session of the Commission. To that end, Mr. Chair, you can count on the full cooperation of the delegation of Argentina.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): We congratulate you, Sir, on your election as the Chair of the Disarmament Commission for this year. On behalf of the Pakistan delegation, I assure you, Sir, and the newly elected Bureau, of our full support and cooperation. We are confident that, with your drive and leadership, the Commission should be able to cover new ground.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/CN.10/PV.337). We also thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson for his insightful opening statement.

Today, global security is in flux. Turbulence has erupted in new countries and regions, with devastating

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impact, even as we deal with the consequences of chronic conflicts. Old disputes continue to fester. New challenges, ranging from space to cyberspace to the use of lethal armed robotics and armed drones, loom large on the horizon. The deadliest weapons of mass destruction and the unbridled build-up of conventional arms jeopardize the security of us all. Yet consensus on the disarmament agenda is elusive and fragile.

There is a compelling need to rebuild global agreement on the disarmament agenda. We believe that the best way to do that is to convene the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, with the aim of coming up with an integrated approach to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner, keeping in view the security interests of all States. For years, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has been calling for convening such a session.

For almost a decade now, Pakistan has been advocating the renewal and reconstruction of the international consensus on disarmament issues. In his address during the substantive segment of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament last year, Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif called for exploring common ground to revive and restore our collective agreement and build a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Rebuilding that consensus is not going to be easy, given the interplay of competing perceptions, interests and approaches. However, it is becoming imperative for the Disarmament Commission, as a deliberative body with universal membership, to give a fresh impetus to such an exercise. Let me outline the factors influencing such an agreement.

First, consensus-building must proceed from the universally recognized premise that security is indivisible and based on the right of all States to equal security, both in the non-conventional and conventional fields, and at regional and international levels.

Secondly, we must clearly understand that there are at least three drivers for the acquisition of weapons — perceived threats from superior conventional or non-conventional forces, disputes and conflicts with more powerful States, and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

Thirdly, an agreed criteria-based and non-discriminatory approach must be developed for the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States.

Fourthly, concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of anti-ballistic missile systems need to be addressed by means of legal instruments.

Fifthly, development and the use of armed drones and lethal autonomous robots must strictly conform to international law.

To bolster consensus, progress is required on all four core issues of the disarmament agenda. There should be a renewed commitment to achieving nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame; without that commitment, the bargain underlying the non-proliferation regime will continue to erode. Until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear weapon States should be given assurances through a universal and legally binding treaty that they will not be subject to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The international legal regime must be strengthened in order to prevent the militarization of outer space. Finally, a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) should be conceived and negotiated as an integral part of the overall disarmament agenda, with the genuine desire to ensure equal security for all, on a non-discriminatory basis. A lopsided, unifocal pursuit of an FMCT, driven by a non-proliferation prism while soft-pedaling other core issues or relegating them to a back-burner, has not succeeded in the past; it is not going to work in the future either.

Pakistan welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty as a first step towards a more responsible transfer of arms and a means of reducing human suffering without having an impact on the self-defence needs of States. Pakistan calls for the next step of promoting conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels, legal restraints on excessive production of such arms and balanced reduction in conventional forces and armaments.

Pakistan supports the development of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. We have contributed constructively to the deliberations on that aspect in the past decade. We look forward to the Commission's proceedings on that important issue this year.

Pakistan's approach to nuclear disarmament is determined by the guiding principles of the first

special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which uphold the right of each State to undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments and military force. As Prime Minister Sharif told the General Assembly last year: "This means security for all; not security of a privileged few."

Guided by the principles of restraint and responsibility, we will continue to adhere to our policy of credible minimal deterrence. We do not want an arms race in South Asia, but we are fully attentive to the emerging security dynamics. Our deterrence will remain symmetric and credible.

Meanwhile, Pakistan will continue to pursue its policy of a strategic restraint regime, which includes nuclear restraint, conventional balance and conflict resolution. In the past, we have engaged India to work on confidence-building and nuclear risk reduction through a series of measures covering communications, pre-notification of missile flight tests and accidents. We believe that the introduction of a ballistic missile defence system in South Asia will be an escalatory and destabilizing step.

We call upon the international community to reverse discrimination and enable Pakistan to have full access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Pakistan needs that technology to produce more nuclear energy to redress its growing electricity deficit. We also call for Pakistan to be a member of export control regimes, especially the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The so-called deadlock afflicting the disarmament machinery does not arise from the way it conducts its business. There is nothing wrong with the disarmament machinery, the rules of procedures or the working methods. The same institutions, rules and methods in the past produced the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and guidelines for nuclear-weapon-free zones and international arms transfers. The real challenge lies with the international strategic and political environment as perceived in capitals. What we need is the political will and due diligence, especially by major Powers, and not attempts to rewrite the rules of procedure or reconfigure the disarmament machinery.

Mr. Lasso Mendoza (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, my delegation congratulates you on your election, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau. We also congratulate the Chairs of the Working Groups on their appointments. At the same time, I would like to reiterate my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Grima of Malta and Ambassador Roman-Morey of Peru, former Chairs of the Commission in the three-year cycle that is coming to an end this year.

The delegation of Ecuador aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

Ecuador was the first country in the world to recognize in its Constitution nature's rights for its existence, maintenance, structures, functions and evolutionary processes and the regeneration of its vital cycles to be subject to less human aggression. The Ecuadorian Constitution also declares the country's territory a zone of peace so as to ensure that its citizens lived in a healthy environment. In that context, Ecuador condemns the very existence of weapons of mass destruction on the face of the Earth and believes that their use or threat of use constitute a crime against nature and against humankind itself.

Like many other States, as demonstrated by the successful General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held in September 2013, Ecuador believes that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation should be simultaneous, interrelated and confluent processes. My country, a State that does not possess nuclear weapons, has and will continue to comply with its international obligations on nuclear non-proliferation. We continue to hope that nuclear-weapon States will fulfil their commitments on nuclear disarmament. However, Ecuador is dismayed that there is still no compliance with that obligation to date.

Ecuador believes that it is time that the international community put into practice the priority attached to nuclear disarmament and start negotiating a legally binding and universal treaty banning the development, possession and use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, my delegation hopes for the prompt establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where such zones do not yet exist, in accordance with the principles adopted by consensus by the Disarmament Commission itself in 1999. I would recall that the relevant working group was chaired by Ecuador. In that way, we would take substantial steps in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In that

regard, my delegation regrets that the conference on the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East has not yet been convened, as it should have already taken place in 2012. We call on the organizers to convene it in order to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as soon as possible.

Ecuador also believes the agenda item on practical measures for confidence-building in the field of conventional weapons to be relevant. That topic is crucial for Ecuador, as such measures provide important support to peace, security and stability, in particular at the regional, subregional and bilateral levels. Furthermore, we believe that such measures are best and most fully expressed at those levels, notwithstanding the progress that can be made on them in the multilateral arena.

In that vein, Ecuador, together with the other countries of the Union of South American Nations, has been promoting confidence-building measures, in particular in the following categories: information exchange and transparency, in terms of both defence systems and defence spending; notification of military activities; measures in the field of security; guarantees; and compliance and verification measures. That process is still in its initial stages, but it is gaining momentum by the day and has the support of all countries in the South American region, including, of course, Ecuador.

In that respect, we believe that anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions are a threat to innocent civilians. Therefore my country is a party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which ban such weapons. Consistent with that, as a practical example of the implementation of measures to promote confidence at the bilateral level, Ecuador, along with its neighbour Peru, has embarked upon a successful humanitarian mine-clearance process along our common border, which we expect to be completed in October 2017. During the visit to my country by His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al-Hussein, Special Envoy on the Universalization of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, that urgent effort was recognized.

Trust is built, among other things, on the basis of an appropriate balance of rights and obligations among States, always in the context of the principles and rights enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Ecuador has always respected the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intereference in the internal affairs of other States, political sovereignty, territorial integrity, self-determination and the right to self-defence.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to express its full commitment to the decisions and agreements reached in the context of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. By the same token, we also express our full support for the United Nations Disarmament Commission as the deliberative organ of the Organization's disarmament machinery, whose function is to consider and make recommendations on the various issues in the area of disarmament, as well as for the Conference on Disarmament as the sole negotiating body in that area.

In that context, we express our hope that all States will show sufficient political will so as to reach agreement on the recommendations under both agenda items for submission to the General Assembly. My delegation will devote its utmost efforts and capitalize on its conviction in order to achieve that goal.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): Malaysia extends its warm congratulations to you, Mr. Chair, as Permanent Representative of Croatia on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 2014 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). Allow me also to congratulate the other Bureau members, as well as the Chairs of the respective Working Groups, Ambassador Naif bin Bandar Al-Sudairy of Saudi Arabia and Mr. Knut Langeland of Norway, on their elections. I would also like to thank Ambassador Christopher Grima of Malta for his contribution and constructive efforts as Chair of the Disarmament Commission last year.

Malaysia associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

Malaysia reaffirms the continuing relevance of the Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized body with universal membership in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The UNDC provides a comprehensive and deliberative approach, which is important in order to achieve an outcome that enjoys the broadest possible support. As such, my delegation welcomes the progress made at the 2013 substantive session of the UNDC, where for the first time in eight years we were able to send forward three working

papers as a starting point for the final session of the current cycle.

Now that the stage has been set for this year, we should capitalize on that momentum and fulfil our collective responsibility by adopting recommendations that lead towards general and complete disarmament. Malaysia reiterates its call for all parties to renew their commitment to that process and to demonstrate the necessary flexibility, compromise and political will in order to come up with a successful substantive outcome.

In three weeks' time, many of us here will participate in the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to be held here in New York. Malaysia is of the view that this year's Preparatory Committee session should continue the momentum towards greater cooperation on achieving the NPT's objectives on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, bearing in mind the targets that we agreed upon in the action plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

In achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, Malaysia is of the view that all parties should heed the obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion the negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control, as reflected in the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice (A/51/218, annex). That was also espoused by The Honourable Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, in his remarks during the first ever General Assemably High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, held last year. Through that landmark event and the pronouncements of many of our leaders, it is clear that nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority of the international community.

My delegation is also heartened by the growing interest of Member States in a humanitarian approach to the consequences of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we congratulate Mexico on the successful hosting of the second International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held on 13 and 14 February. We look forward to further progress on that matter during the next conference, to be hosted by Austria.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, my delegation reiterates its call for the urgent conclusion of a universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances. We also remain concerned about the lack of progress on the reduction of strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons, and we are deeply disturbed about on the modernization and upgrading of nuclear arsenals by nuclear-weapon States.

Turning to nuclear-weapon-free zones, my delegation is deeply disappointed about the continued failure to convene the conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Like many others, last year we anticipated that such delay would have serious implications in the run-up to the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Unfortunately, that prediction has turned out to be correct. Malaysia therefore strongly urges the Secretary-General, as well as the States concerned, to convene the conference without any further delay and with the active participation of all States in the region so as to avoid any further possible negative repercussions for the credibility of the Treaty itself. All States should approach the conference with an open mind on, and without prejudice to, the various security concerns of others.

Malaysia continues to believe that such zones contribute significantly to global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. In that connection, my delegation also looks forward to the conclusion of negotiations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the five nuclear-weapon States on the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. We hope that the nuclear-weapon States will commit to the signing of the Protocol to the Treaty and its related documents at the earliest possible opportunity.

With regard to conventional weapons, Malaysia welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We subsequently joined the ranks of signatory States to the ATT on 26 September 2013. Malaysia has always supported the ATT process. While recognizing that, although the Treaty may not satisfy all the concerns of all States, we are convinced that it will develop and evolve into a common understanding.

Malaysia will continue to support confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons at all levels, as that would contribute to strengthening international peace and security. My delegation further reaffirms the validity and importance and the need for the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat

and Eradication the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Malaysia is of the view that the Programme of Action will promote and facilitate international cooperation, which will enhance the effectiveness and complement existing bilateral, regional and international agreements to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. In that regard, we see the upcoming fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action as an important forum where confidence-building measures can be deliberated and consensually agreed upon.

On that note, my delegation expresses its hope for a results-oriented UNDC session in 2014. We call on all Member States to rejuvenate our negotiations in order to move forward on substantive matters towards a successful conclusion.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming Malaysia's support to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Bureau at this session.

Ms. Paik Ji-ah (Republic of Korea): I would like to join other speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I am sure your able leadership will guide us in our deliberations for the next three weeks and enable us to achieve a fruitful outcome. I assure you of my delegation's full support. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election and express our gratitude to the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Christopher Grima of Malta. And I thank Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson for his participation and remarks this morning (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

The Disarmament Commission is at a critical juncture. Delegations have expressed concerns and worries about the Commission's long-time failure to produce any recommendations. Another failure to achieve a meaningful outcome this year, and simply extend the three-year cycle, would endanger its raison d'être and undermine the credibility and authority of the multilateral disarmament machinery of the United Nations. In that regard, my delegation suggests that for the next three weeks delegations focus more on common denominators than on differences. The outcomes may not satisfy all Member States, but an incremental agreement would be better than none. Above all, progress is what the Commission urgently needs. To that end, the Republic of Korea looks forward to seeing a spirit of cooperation and compromise and an exhibition of political will on the part of all Member States.

The Republic of Korea believes that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and a key element of the international security architecture. In that context, discussion should be based on a balanced approach to the Treaty's three pillars and contribute to strengthening the NPT regime, including its universality. As such, it is important for all Member States to implement practical measures, as outlined in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We look forward to a fruitful discussion at the upcoming meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. At the same time, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty are two urgent and much-overdue tasks that can be delayed no longer.

As the host of the 2012 second Nuclear Security Summit, in Seoul, the Republic of Korea sought a world without nuclear weapons. We welcome the successful third Nuclear Security Summit, held in The Hague last month, and the adoption of the Hague communiqué. In that regard, my delegation would like to recall the four-point proposal presented by President Park Geun-hye of the Republic of Korea in her address at The Hague. The points are, first, requiring a holistic approach that promotes synergy among nuclear security, nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation; secondly, pursuing a regional dialogue mechanism; thirdly, overcoming the capacity gap among States; and, fourthly, taking steps to tackle the emerging threat of cyber-terrorism against nuclear facilities. Although these serve mainly to advance the nuclear security architecture, they are also the areas we should keep in mind in discussing our agenda.

With regard to confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, we should exploit the unique momentum achieved recently. The overwhelming support of the General Assembly last year, as well as the rapid increase in ratifications of the Arms Trade Treaty, speaks to the international community's broad support for it. We look forward to its early entry into force. Together with the successful outcome of the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme

of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, we expect that it will have a positive impact on the Commission's deliberations.

It is evident that the work of the Disarmament Commission cannot proceed independently of the overall nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation situation across the international community. Against that backdrop, we have witnessed both positive and negative developments. We see positive trends in the negotiation between the 5+1 group and Iran. Although there are many pending issues of concern to address if long-term solutions are to be achieved, we consider that negotiations are moving in the right direction.

On the other hand, the North Korean nuclear issue continues to pose a grave threat to the Korean peninsula, the region and beyond, as well as a serious and immediate challenge to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Over the years, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has announced its withdrawal from the NPT, launched ballistic missiles ranging from short- to long-range, and conducted three nuclear tests. In recent weeks, it has launched a series of short- and medium-range ballistic missiles, in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, and is even publicly threatening another nuclear test. The Republic of Korea remains fully committed to realizing the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a peaceful manner and in close cooperation with the international community. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately stop such provocations and to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, including its uranium enrichment, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in compliance with its international obligations, including those under Security Council resolutions.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the sincere hope that the Disarmament Commission will emerge from its prolonged impasse and once again play a unique role in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. It is a task that requires our collective wisdom and a shared sense of responsibility for our future. We look forward to a fruitful outcome at the end of this session.

Mr. Zhang Junan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair for this session of the Disarmament Commission. The Chinese delegation will cooperate fully with you and other delegations in order to contribute to our efforts to achieve substantive progress at this session.

The world today is undergoing profound and complex changes. Countries are increasingly interdependent and linked by growing common interests. We believe the international community should adopt a new concept of security based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination, and should work together to address our diverse security challenges and settle disputes by diplomatic and peaceful means, in order to create a peaceful and stable international and regional security environment conducive to the promotion of a multilateral arms-control and non-proliferation process.

As a nuclear-weapon State, China has earnestly pursued an open, transparent and responsible nuclear policy. At the Nuclear Security Summit held in The Hague a few days ago, His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, made a statement for the first time on China's approach to nuclear security, at the core of which is an equal emphasis on development and security, on rights and obligations, on independent and collaborative efforts and on treating symptoms and addressing causes. He also made a solemn vow that China would stay firmly committed to strengthening its own nuclear security capability, building the international nuclear security system, supporting international cooperation on nuclear security and upholding regional and global peace and stability. He thus fully demonstrated China's commitment as a responsible country in the area of significant international security issues and underlined its important role in improving global nuclear security standards and achieving enduring nuclear security.

China stands for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, and has always maintained its own nuclear forces at the minimum level necessary for its national security needs. We have exercised the utmost restraint in the development of nuclear weapons. China has adhered firmly to a nuclear strategy of self-defence and a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances. It is unequivocally and unconditionally committed to a policy of no-use or threat-of-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or in nuclear-weapon-free zones, and it has always respected and supported the efforts of relevant countries and regions to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones.

China supports the principles and goals of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and remains committed to the nuclear-test moratorium.

China hopes that the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva will be able to reach consensus on its programme of work at an early date so as to start its substantive work as soon as possible, including the conclusion of a non-discriminatory and multilateral fissile material cut-off treaty with an effective international verification process.

China has been actively participating in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) review process. Together with other nuclear-weapon States, China has held a series of conferences on the implementation of the achievements of the NPT review process. The fifth round of the P-5 conference on the implementation of the NPT will be held on 14 and 15 April in Beijing. In addition, the P-5 working group on glossary and definitions for key nuclear terms, chaired by China, has held two expert meetings in Beijing. The working group will endeavour to submit its outcome to the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT.

China is of the view that international nuclear disarmament should follow the principles of maintaining global strategic stability and undiminished security for all. The countries with the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament, and should continue to make drastic and substantive reductions in their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable and irreversible manner.

The development of missile defence systems, which undermines global security, strategic balance and stability, should be suspended. To achieve the ultimate goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament, the international community should develop, at an appropriate time, a viable and long-term plan composed of phased actions, including the conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

China firmly opposes any form of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and promotes peaceful solutions to regional nuclear issues through dialogue and negotiations, with a view to upholding the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and maintaining international and regional peace and security.

China is committed to achieving the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and safeguarding the peace and stability of the peninsula and North-East Asia. China will continue to make efforts to urge all parties to resolve their concerns through dialogue in a balanced manner and ease the current situation and will commit to promoting the resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

China has been actively participating in the diplomatic efforts to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiations. Under the joint efforts made by the P5+1 group and Iran, there has been a substantial achievement on the negotiation of the Iranian nuclear issue, namely the first-step agreement. China also made a voluntary contribution of RMB 1.5 million to the International Atomic Energy Agency for its safeguards work in Iran implementing the above-mentioned agreement. Another round of P5+1 talks with Iran is now under way, and China has already proposed five principles for a comprehensive settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue and has played a constructive role in facilitating the dialogue process. It is China's hope that all the relevant parties will help the substantive negotiations to succeed and seek a comprehensive, long-term and appropriate solution to the Iranian nuclear issue in a step-by-step manner.

China has always supported the establishment of practical and feasible confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms control and has made continuous efforts on promoting the related international and regional disarmament process and exploration of confidence-building measures.

China supports the necessary adjustments to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms in line with the development of the international and regional security situation, while taking into account the concerns of all parties. The priority now is to improve the coverage of the Register, that is, to increase the number of participating countries.

China attaches great importance to the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. China has adopted a series of measures on legislation, law enforcement, capacity building, international exchanges and cooperation and is actively preparing to submit a new national implementation report of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. China participated in the Security Council high-level meeting on small arms and light weapons held in September 2013 (see S/PV.7036) in a constructive manner and made four proposals to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

China supports the international community taking the necessary measures to regulate the international trade in conventional arms and to combat the illicit transfer and trafficking of conventional arms. China participated constructively in the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). China is currently studying the issue of signing the ATT. China attaches importance to the humanitarian issues caused by the illicit trade of conventional arms and is ready to strengthen cooperation with all parties with a view to building a regulated and reasonable arms trade order.

The current multilateral disarmament machinery, including the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, has made a tremendous contribution to safeguarding world peace and promoting the arms control process over the past decades. As the unique deliberative body of the machinery, the Commission has played an important role in setting the priority agenda for multilateral disarmament negotiations. China hopes that Member States view the role and status of the Commission from a rational and practical perspective and will conduct their work in a pragmatic manner so as to make positive progress at this session.

Mr. AlAjmi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to chair the Disarmament Commission at its 2014 substantive session. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. We are certain that your capabilities and experience will contribute to the success of this session, to furthering the Commission's purposes and to formulating recommendations that reflect the concerns of all Member States.

My delegation would like to express its support for the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

My delegation emphasizes the major role and increasing importance of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Disarmament Commission is considered one of the main, effective pillars of such diplomacy, since it is the only multilateral deliberative body specializing in submitting recommendations relating to the important issues listed on its agenda.

The Commission is meeting today as part of its 2014 substantive session. We hope that this will create a new situation that will restore the Commission's previous standing through the adoption of recommendations related to disarmament, non-proliferation and international security. It is our hope that all participating delegations at this session will work on creating a new situation that will restore the Commission's previous agenda.

In connection with the agenda item entitled "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", many multilateral and international efforts have been made over seven decades to contain the danger of that destructive category of weapons. That issue was also at the forefront of the United Nations priorities and was embodied in the declared goals of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978. However, the outcome of that session have to date not had any results that positively reflect on the multilateral disarmament mechanisms, in particular the Conference on Disarmament, which has been stalemated for almost two decades, or the Disarmament Commission itself, which for 14 years has failed to reach consensus on the many issues relating to disarmament and non-proliferation on its agenda.

Regional and subregional entities have a central role to play in guaranteeing the success of any international efforts that seek to create a better world, one that enjoys peace and security, by strengthening the frameworks of cooperation among States. In that respect, the zones free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction have played a pivotal role in supporting international efforts to create a world free of such weapons.

Nevertheless, the Middle East region is still far from achieving that noble goal. Indeed, despite the resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference and the consensus decision contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference calling for the convening of a conference in 2012 to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, that conference did not take place. In addition, Kuwait calls for the holding of such a conference as soon as possible, with all countries of the region participating, including Israel, without preconditions. We also emphasize the need for Israel to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and subject all of its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Kuwait welcomes the initiative of the Arab Republic of Egypt submitted to the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly containing practical measures towards establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. That initiative has garnered the support of all Arab States and the Islamic Republic of Iran through official letters addressed to the Secretary-General, pursuant to their legal and moral commitment to the resolutions adopted during NPT Review Conferences.

Kuwait welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 68/32 entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", which was held on the margins of the sixty-eighth session.

With respect to the second item on the Commission's agenda, "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons", we would note the important role played by the guidelines in defining confidence-building measures that should be implemented on the regional and international levels. Such measures will have a concrete impact on regional and international peace and security, on transparency and on the willingness to share points of view. We would also like to highlight that such measures should take into account the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, such as non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, the equality and sovereignty of all States, the importance of refraining from the use or the threat of the use of force against the territorial integrity of any State, the inalienable rights of peoples under occupation to self-determination, the rejection of foreign occupation, the right of States to political independence and territorial integrity, and the fact that States should not occupy the territory of others.

My delegation cannot but remind the Commission of the importance of cooperation and the provision of technical and financial assistance with regard to confidence-building measures, pursuant to international treaties and conventions, including the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects or the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Lastly, we hope that this year we will develop recommendations that have been sorely needed. We hope that all delegations will take part with sufficient political will to see the United Nations purposes of disarmament and non-proliferation, as embodied in the purposes and principles of the Charter, succeed.

Mr. Umemoto (Japan): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), as well as the members of the UNDC Bureau upon their election. I assure you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau, that you have the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

The UNDC was once renowned as the leading deliberative United Nations body in the field of disarmament, while the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva was established as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. However, both bodies have failed to fulfil their mandates.

Although the UNDC has in the past adopted 16 consensus documents on guidelines and recommendations, including the well-known guidelines for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the Commission has remained in deadlock for nearly 15 years now. This year, the final year of the current three-year cycle, the States Members of the United Nations are supposed to come up with a consensus document that will guide us to further disarmament. Japan will actively contribute to the results of this year's substantive session, but the lack of yet another substantive outcome at the UNDC will seriously put the Commission's raison d'être into question.

I would now like to mention another challenge to international efforts in the disarmament and non-proliferation field. Despite the repeated adoption of Security Council resolutions on the nuclear and missile activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to face serious challenges, including numerous cases of outright violations. In that context, the recent ballistic missile launches conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are clear violations of Security Council resolutions and should be condemned.

In January of this year, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fumio Kishida, delivered a speech in Nagasaki on Japan's nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation policy. In his address, Minister Kishida explained that nuclear disarmament and

non-proliferation efforts should be built upon the following two notions. First, we should have a clear understanding of the humanitarian aspect of nuclear weapons as a point of departure for those efforts. Secondly, we should objectively assess the reality that the international community of today is facing in terms of the increasingly diverse nuclear risks. From those two understandings, we conclude that steady but tireless efforts to build up practical and concrete measures are actually the shortest path to achieving our common goal.

Political engagement is indispensable to the success of our efforts. Accordingly, 12 cross-regional members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), including my own country, are committed to the group's activities at the ministerial level. The NPDI is an action-oriented group that has put forward such concrete proposals as the draft standard reporting form on nuclear weapons transparency.

In a few days' time, on 11 and 12 April, Foreign Ministers of the NPDI member countries will meet in Hiroshima. During the course of the meeting, Japan intends to have the Ministers directly see and feel the realities caused by the bombings. Participants will exchange views on various issues, including nuclear disarmament in the post New START agreement era and its increased transparency, de-alerting, humanitarian aspects, a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear security. The Ministers will aim to present useful proposals for the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, which will begin later this month in New York.

As the only country ever to have suffered from nuclear bombings, Japan understands the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that result from them. As a result, Japan has sought to proactively contribute to discussions on the issue. I would like to reiterate that in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, a clear understanding of humanitarian consequences caused by the use of nuclear weapons should underpin all efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament. In other words, the humanitarian aspect of disarmament should function as a driving force in our efforts to reach a world free of nuclear weapons in a manner that is inclusive and open to all States.

In 2015, we will commemorate the seventieth year since atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is my sincere desire that the steady implementation of practical and effective disarmament measures, including through the substantive work of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, will achieve a step forward towards a world free of nuclear weapons. I invite all colleagues to visit the permanent exhibition on the atomic bombings in this United Nations building.

Addressing the enormous damage caused by conventional arms continues to be of the utmost importance to the international community. That is the area where United Nations leadership is needed. Japan has been supportive of the greater role of the United Nations in that field since we proposed the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. In that regard, I would like to refer to two significant challenges that States Members of the United Nations must face in the coming months.

First, the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and its opening for signature mark a significant milestone for the world. Now the challenge ahead is to make the Treaty a reality through its early entry into force. Japan signed the Treaty on 3 June last year, the date opened for its signing. We submitted the Treaty to the National Diet last January in the determination to conclude it at the earliest date. In particular, the conclusion by the principal arms trade countries is essential. Japan would like to reiterate its call to those countries that have not yet done so to sign the Treaty without delay and to make the utmost efforts for its conclusion. As one of the original co-author States of the resolution that began the ATT process, Japan will continue to work hard with other Governments and civil society in order to achieve the early entry into force and effective implementation of the Treaty.

Secondly, the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms will provide an important opportunity to advance efforts by the United Nations to tackle the enduring problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. On the basis of the agreement reached at the successful 2012 Review Conference on the Programme of Action, we are expected to deepen our discussion on preventative measures on stockpile management, marking and tracing, as well as international cooperation and assistance. Japan highly commends Ambassador Tanin, Chair-designate of the fifth Biennial Meeting, for the transparent and efficient manner in which he has been conducting preparatory work towards the Conference in June. Japan will

continue to be engaged actively in its work towards the successful outcome at that Meeting.

Despite the lack of progress in the United Nations disarmament machinery, there is still hope. For example, the Group of Governmental Experts on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, established by resolution 67/53, in 2012, began its substantive work last week in Geneva and is currently in the middle of its first session. I am quite confident that, upon the completion of its two years of work in 2015, the Group will produce substantive recommendations that will significantly contribute to future negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty once such negotiations commence.

If the UNDC is to have a positive impact on the United Nations disarmament machinery, including through the Group of Governmental Experts, surely now is the time for it to reclaim its mandate and deliberate with a view to producing beneficial guidelines and recommendations. Supported by substantial human and financial resources, the expectations for the UNDC to produce results are rightfully high. Providing all the support that it can to the Chair, Japan will endeavour to ensure that this final year of the three-year cycle leads to a positive outcome.

Mr. Al-Sudairy (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is pleased to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption as Chair of the Commission. It is a testament to your personal qualifications and to the high esteem in which your country, Croatia, is held. We are confident of your abilities and effective leadership in making our deliberations a success. We should also like to express our appreciation for the efforts of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in preparing for this meeting.

In that context, my Government wishes to reaffirm the concerns expressed in the report, in particular with regard to the establishment of a free-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, an idea that was adopted by the General Assembly in 1974 in resolution 3263 (XXIX), as well as an issue that has been adopted by consensus since the thirty-fifth of the General Assembly in 1980. It is a fact that peace and security can be achieved not through the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, but through cooperation and communication among States that seek to achieve development and progress and to prevent the acquisition of those terrible weapons.

Israel's possession of nuclear weapons is therefore a fundamental obstacle to the achievement of security and stability in the Middle East region. Consequently, all justifications used by Israel for its possession of nuclear weapons and the development of weapons of mass destruction are a flagrant contradiction to its claims that it seeks to achieve peace among the States of the region.

Genuine peace must be based on trust and sincere intentions among the States and peoples of the region, without oppression or heinous crimes. Clearly, peace cannot be achieved through the possession of nuclear weapons and the threat of using them. The imposition of the reality on the ground, namely, hegemony, will be a source of concern and threat not only to the peoples of the region but also to international peace and security.

My Government hopes that Iran will continue on the path of cooperation with the P5+1 group and on a positive track towards security and stability in the Arab Gulf. That is part and parcel of international security and stability. We always bear in mind that all States have the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Peace and stability in the region and beyond, throughout the world, can be achieved not by possessing weapons but through cooperation, understanding and respect for the rights of others and non-hegemonic policies, as well as by working for the sake of the community of nations rather than for narrow self-interest. The phased reduction of nuclear weapons is a positive step in ensuring a promising future for humankind.

Through your chairmanship of the Commission, Sir, after much delay, Member States express the hope that we will achieve what we have long awaited, namely, the implementation of the the Working Group's recommendations on the elimination of nuclear weapons and their non-proliferation. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as Chair of Working Group I, will do its utmost to ensure that the report is issued with the cooperation of all our colleagues in the group. It will be issued following two years of discussions, which led to the issuance of two documents last year. We are now about to issue a new document, which may provide a reasonable basis for an adoption in the coming few days. If that were to be achieved, please accept in advance the expression of my gratitude, to you, Mr. Chair, and to my colleagues, the members of other delegations.

In conclusion, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to reiterate that the elimination of nuclear weapons provides the guarantee that they will never be used either as a threat or as an actual weapon. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that the fears and concerns of States that do not possess nuclear weapons must be taken seriously in the light of the continuous instability in the Middle East and the escalating dangers we have witnessed lately. That may be achieved through an international binding instrument that guarantees the safety and stability of non-nuclear-weapon States.

Tangible steps must be taken to build trust and enhance the security of non-nuclear-weapon States.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Our full written statement is being circulated, and I will therefore focus on a just a couple of points.

The Russian Federation has consistently advocated strengthening the central role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, arms control, enhancing non-proliferation regimes and genuine disarmament. We actively support the work of the multilateral disarmament triad: the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. Together with our partners, we are ready to take stock of our substantive discussions in the framework of the Disarmament Commission, whose three-year cycle is coming to an end.

A world free of the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction is one of the key elements for strengthening international security and strategic stability. Russia is making an important contribution to achieving that goal by strictly adhering to its obligations under bilateral and multilateral disarmament agreements, including strict compliance with the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. Further steps of the Russian Federation in the field of nuclear disarmament are only possible with the implementation of that Treaty.

We are also committed to our obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Bearing that in mind, the Russian Federation calls upon all States to consistently move towards creating the conditions for the phased achievement of the strategic goal of building a world free of nuclear weapons.

A reduction and limitation of nuclear weapons cannot be achieved without due regard for all the factors affecting strategic stability. In our opinion, those factors are the unilateral and unjustified build-up of the United States global missile defence system, the lack of any substantive progress in the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the United States unwillingness to renounce the possibility of placing weapons in outer space and the build-up of quantitative and qualitative imbalances in the field of conventional weapons and others.

We call on all countries of the world to unite and strengthen their efforts to establish the conditions that will make it possible to take further steps towards nuclear disarmament while strengthening stability and equal and indivisible security for all. We consider counterproductive any attempt to distract the international community by introducing certain artificially created issues such as the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. The Russian Federation understands the serious consequences of using of nuclear weapons and will continue make every possible effort to avoid that.

With regard to preventing threats to the non-proliferation regime, one of the main goals is to increase international cooperation to ensure that non-State actors, in particular terrorists, do not gain access to nuclear materials and related technologies. We would also like to emphasize the need to hold a conference as early as possible, with the participation of all States of the Middle East, on the issue of establishing a zone in the region free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

We cannot allow outer space to become a new area of military confrontation and potential theatre of war. It is necessary to develop as quickly as possible a legally binding international treaty to prevent the deployment of weapons in outer space. The main thrust of such a treaty, which is reflected in the relevant Russian-Chinese draft text, is supported by the overwhelming majority of the members of the international community. We call on all States to follow our example and to commit themselves to a policy of no-first-placement of weapons in outer space.

During the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the Russian Federation will introduce a

draft resolution on no-first-placement of weapons in outer space. We expect broad sponsorship for that draft resolution and for it to be adopted by consensus.

At that forum, the Russian Federation plans to develop a draft document, a kind of food-for-thought, on increasing transparency and confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons with a particular focus on preventing the deployment of weapons in outer space. We invite all interested States to support that document and join the ranks of its sponsors.

In the modern world, transparency and confidence-building measures are becoming increasingly important. I would like to underscore that, at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the First Committee adopted by consensus a draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures with unprecedented sponsorship, including by the Russian Federation, China and the United States, as well as 67 other States.

Russia will also seek to bring the conventional arms control regimes in balance, as well as to ensure unconditional observance by all States of agreed confidence-building and security measures.

With regard to small arms and light weapons, Russia considers black markets to be the main threat, as they provide terrorists, extremists, illegal armed groups, members of organized and street crime with weapons that fuel all kinds of conflicts. Tangible results in curbing their proliferation will increase substantially if concrete measures are taken to prevent those weapons from falling into the hands of those who use them for criminal purposes.

With regard to transparency, we think that the main task of the relevant mechanisms, including the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, is to monitor the destabilizing accumulation of conventional weapons in order to foster effective dialogue among States to address the concerns they may have.

I would like to assure the Commission that the Russian delegation is ready to constructively cooperate with all interested States to work productively, based on consensus, during the 2014 session of the Disarmament Commission.

In conclusion, allow me to just say a few words with regard to the issue of the so-called violations by Russia of the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, which was raised at this morning's meeting (see A/CN.10/PV.337) by my Ukrainian colleague. My delegation considers it essential to make the following statement. The current Government in Kyiv, which came to power as the result of an unconstitutional coup, has, through its policy on national minorities in particular, in essence undermined Ukraine's unity by pushing an entire region out Ukraine.

Neither at the summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held in Budapest in 1994 nor in measures adopted in parallel with that conference did Russia take on the obligation to force a part of Ukraine to remain in that country against the will of its people. The provisions of the Budapest Memorandum do not apply to conditions that occurred as a result of internal political or economic factors. As is well known, 97 per cent of all those who voted in the referendum in Crimea on 16 March, which took place under the control of international observers, voted in favour of joining the Russian Federation, leading thus to Ukraine's loss of its territorial integrity. It was the result of very complex internal processes with which Russia, pursuant to its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum, has no connection.

The Russian Federation has strictly complied, and continues to comply, with its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum in respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, including in the light of the clashes at Maidan. That cannot be said of some Western Powers, which have neglected their obligations. I just want to recall that in Budapest, in addition to the Memorandum, a joint statement was issued by the leaders of the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Ukraine that emphasized the importance of obligations in the framework of the OSCE to combat an increase in chauvinist and nationalist trends. Ukraine did not fulfil those obligations. For many years, it did nothing to stop the rising nationalism and chauvinism that contributed to Crimea's decision to join the Russian Federation.

As for statements to the effect that the Russian Federation is demonstrating that negative security assurances by nuclear-weapon States are not reliable and that it is supposedly undermining nuclear disarmament, we note that an important element of the Budapest Memorandum and the concept of negative security assurances is the obligation not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. Russia has in no way violated that obligation towards Ukraine. All the other obligations under the

Budapest Memorandum reiterate OSCE principles and have no connection to the concept of negative security assurances or negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Statements that Russia supposedly undermines the nuclear non-proliferation regime are not justified or made in good faith.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): On behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I would like, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your assumption of the Chair, as well as the other members of the Bureau on their election. I hope that, under your able leadership and chairmanship, Sir, the current session will be crowned with success.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia, who spoke on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/CN.10/PV.337). We also highly appreciate Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson's opening remarks.

With the current session, we are entering the third year of discussions on drafting recommendations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Recently, we the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement made a collective effort and presented constructive proposals that included realistic ideas and views in favour of nuclear disarmament to be reflected in the recommendations. As today's stark reality clearly indicates, nuclear disarmament remains at a difficult impasse. The country that developed the most powerful weapon in the world, and even used it against the civilian population of two large cities, thus committing massive crimes of genocide — the country that is sitting on the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the world — is hell-bent on modernizing its nuclear weapons, being unsatisfied with its current stockpiles.

The modernization of nuclear weapons by that country has nothing to do with international peace and security; it is merely the product of anachronistic and outdated policies of projecting strength and an unrealizable dream of hegemony over the world. That country continues to advertise a so-called vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, which is both hypocritical and deceptive and designed to cover up its efforts at modernizing its nuclear weapons.

Pushing ahead with its nuclear weapons programme and global missile defence system development despite the serious concerns of the international community is having a negative impact on the strategic balance of the world, advancing the strategic interests of the other nuclear-weapon States and giving rise to an increasingly intense nuclear arms race. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is adamant in its position and stance, which are consistent in their support for the total elimination of all nuclear weapons in existence. We believe that such an end can be achieved only when the largest nuclear-weapon State takes a practical leading role in bringing about nuclear disarmament, halts the modernization of its nuclear weapons programme and stops its development of a missile defence system.

With respect to the grave situation on the Korean peninsula, it is clear that the United States hostile policy of nuclear blackmail is reaching an extreme point. Accordingly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to clarify its position as follows.

First, the United States should stop its joint military drills with South Korea, for they are tantamount to nuclear blackmail against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. As far as the joint military drills are concerned, in their essence and core, they are a very dangerous war game for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, aimed as they are at swallowing up our country and occupying the entire Korean peninsula. It is the therefore the most extreme form of policy of hostility against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Coming into the year 2014, in order to safeguard our national peace and security and create conditions and a climate conducive to opening a dialogue, easing tensions and improving North-South relations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea National Defence Commission advanced crucial proposals calling for the halting of hostile military actions between the two Koreas as a key element. Later, in the follow-up, through the generous efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, there was an opening of dialogue and an easing of tensions that was warmly welcomed by the international community. Only the United States brazenly ignored our crucial proposals to stop the mobilization of nuclear weapons in its military drills. Rather, it openly declared to the world that it would not change its policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It would continue to conduct military drills with South Korea, as planned. Then, the United States, by entering into joint military drills despite the serious concern of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and all fellow

Korean countrymen in North-East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region, did not hestitate to start the drills and even to fly nuclear-weapon-carrying B-52 strategic bombers into South Korea, while North Korea and South Korea were sitting together at the dialogue table.

Furthermore, the United States did not hesitate to enter into the joint military drills just when the reunion of separated families was successfully being held, despite the objections of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the request from the South Korean authorities with regard to that issue. The families were experiencing the feeling of very warm and friendly blood-relation kinship in Mount Kumgang-san. On the pretext of the joint military drills coordinating the Foal Eagle exercise, the United States has now established a massive arms build-up in South Korea with the deployment of nuclear-weapon-carrying nuclear-powered submarines, destroyers carrying Tomahawk cruise missiles and equipped with the most sophisticated Aegis system and all other kinds of weapons of mass destruction. As part of the exercise, the United States and South Korea conducted a massive landing exercise in South Korea. That exercise was the largest ever since 1993. The United States openly declared that it was targeted at the occupation of Pyongyang.

Secondly, the United States should stop misleading the world with false rumours about the so-called provocation and threats by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with regard to its very righteous and just self-defence countermeasures against the joint military drills and blackmail of nuclear weapons.

As everyone knows, recently, the strategic forces of the Korean People's Army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted planned and routine rocket launch exercises in response again to the ongoing and ever-escalating tension and joint military drills of the United States. It was therefore more than a justifiable self-defence measure in exercise of the right to self-defence as a State Member of the United Nations. However, the United States raised the issue at the Security Council, manipulated the adoption of so-called elements and condemned the rocket launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a violation of the resolutions.

As everyone knows, by opening the joint military drills, the United States has escalated the situation. Now it is now implicating our self-defence measures as provocative military actions. That is further provocation. The United States is creating such tension in order to sustain a vicious cycle of tension in the Korean peninsula, to block the process of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and to creat a pretext to maintain outdated military alliance and military presence in North-East Asia.

As far as its legal commitments are concerned, the United States made a commitment to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the bilateral agreements under, first, the Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of October 1994, secondly, the Washington, D.C., Joint Communiqué between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of October 2000, and, thirdly, the joint statements of 15 September 1995 and of February 2012. The United States made a commitment not to impose a hostile policy on or to undertake nuclear blackmail against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, it has overturned all those commitments and listed the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as part of the axis of evil and as a target for a pre-emptive nuclear weapon strike. Now it conducts joint military drills every year.

The question now arises when the United States enters the territory of another country across the ocean, far from its land, opening aggressive and provocative military drills on our doorstep and calling it routine and annual. But when we exercise the right to self-defence, the United States calls it provocation and a threat. That is a typical and gangster-like American-style expression of its policy. It is very unique to and very popular with the United States in today's world.

As everyone clearly knows, the escalation of tension on the Korean peninsula has been created by the United States. The provocation comes from the United States. The situation on the Korean peninsula is driven and master-minded by the United States.

As long as the United States continues to bring all the various means for a nuclear strike into the Korean peinsula under the pretext of its joint nuclear war exercises, it is natural for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take self-defence countermeasures to strengthen its nuclear deterrent force and its power on Earth.

Thus far in my statement, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has drawn attention to nuclear blackmail by the United States of one country for more than six decades. We express the

hope that this meeting will pay due attention to that very grave situation. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea affirms that it will closely cooperate with the efforts of members participating in the meeting.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue its efforts towards the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula but such efforts will be purely in order to put an end to the nuclear blackmail of our country.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia); Allow me to join so many before me in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the current session.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

Allow me to share the fact that Colombia, with its long-standing dedication to peace, its respect for international law and its firm commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which are basic principles of its foreign policy, has taken an active part in all international forums that deal with this issue of such fundamental universal interest. We have also helped to seek agreements that preserve the goal that inspired the establishment of the United Nations and that respect its purposes and principles by supporting initiatives to free the world from the threat posed by nuclear weapons and by participating in the main legal instruments in that area.

In our capacity as a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Colombia has always stressed the importance of the effective implementation of the three pillars of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, namely, disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In that context, we are of the view that the framework of the NPT, both through its provisions and its Review Conferences, has established action plans for advancing nuclear disarmament. That is why, for the next Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be held in 2015, we emphasize the importance of achieving meaningful progress in fully complying with our obligations under the Treaty, particularly those specified in article VI, concerning the total elimination of this type of weapon, particularly bearing in mind the threat to humankind posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use, as has been noted at the first and second International Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held, respectively in Norway in 2013 and Mexico City in 2014.

Colombia is a party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean — the Treaty of Tlatelolco, as it is well known — whereby the region became the first area of the planet to be definitively without nuclear weapons and with a population free of their influence, representing an invaluable step for us towards peace. In that context, Colombia once again urges that nuclear-weapon-free zones be established as a contribution to international peace and security. We would also like to express our concern about the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons among non-State actors, which is why we urge countries to comply with their obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), whose significance lies in the fact that it complements the existing binding instruments on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As a result, with support from the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism and in compliance with post-1540 decisions, Colombia has developed a national plan of action to strengthen its ability to ensure the effective implementation of the resolution on its territory. I would like to take this opportunity to invite States and organizations able to do so to support us.

As the Commission is aware, conventional weapons are responsible for the majority of fatalities worldwide. It is these arms that sustain criminal behaviour and violent situations that damage development and cause severe humanitarian problems. The illicit trade in small arms, ammunition and explosives is a scourge that contributes to other issues such as the global drug problem, which my country suffers from, terrorism and transnational organized crime. As a representative of my country, which is fully conscious of the terrible consequences of the illicit arms trade, I welcomed the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, which celebrated its first anniversary on 2 April, just a few days ago. We are pleased that so far 118 States have signed the Treaty and 30 have ratified it. My Government is currently presenting the text of the Treaty to our national Congress, and we hope that by June we will have become one of the first 50 States to ratify it.

When it comes to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, ammunition and explosives, we States will be able to tackle it only if we act quickly, cooperatively and in a coordinated way. We hope that

the second Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, along with the preparations for the fifth Biennial Meeting of States parties to consider the implementation of the Programme and the International Tracing Instrument, which will take place in New York from 16 to 20 June, will provide an opportunity to make major progress in this area. As we have done in the past, Colombia, together with South Africa and Japan, sponsored resolution 68/48, entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", which highlighted how important it is that States intensify their efforts to build their national capacity for effectively implementing the Programme of Action.

For Colombia and its entire region, every effort in the area of disarmament and the non-proliferation of conventional weapons should be backed by measures aimed at building confidence, transparency and ongoing dialogue. During the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which took place in Havana and was attended by some of those here and presided over by our neighbour Costa Rica, Colombia supported the proposal of El Salvador for a special declaration on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects in Latin America and the Caribbean. CELAC's Heads of State and Government agreed to establish a working group to consider illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. In Havana, in the presence of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, we also introduced a proposal for a mechanism and procedures that would enable us to coordinate efforts in this area, based on full respect for international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Colombia believes that confidence-building measures are an effective way to promote international cooperation in encouraging exchanges of experiences and developing and maintaining best practices in disarmament and non-proliferation in our region, as we did when, while presiding as Secretary-General over the Union of South American Nations, we took the opportunity to produce a South American register of military spending and a standardized methodology for presenting its annual report. This is a historic step forward for a region such as South America; the register has become part of the United Nations Register of Conventional Weapons, and we believe that its transparency makes it an enormously useful tool for our Governments.

Colombia, as a State committed to the major international instruments regulating weapons with humanitarian impact, including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, works actively to promote and implement them, with special emphasis on applying a comprehensive focus on protecting and helpint the victims of such weapons. A few days ago, in this very room, we commemorated the International Day of Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, together with Japan, and listened to a recital of statistics that we are not proud of. We have the world's second-largest number of victims of anti-personnel mines, due to non-State armed actors whose activities have created obstacles to Colombia's social and economic development. Nonetheless, we are firmly committed to the full elimination of such weapons. We are working with the United Nations Mine Action Service and hope that one result of our continuing and persistent struggle to deal with these issues will be our accumulation of valuable and significant experience that we can offer to States parties to the Convention, which will enable us to contribute to world peace and security, to which we are so firmly committed. We will continue to offer such cooperation to countries that need it.

I thank you, Mr. Chair, for this opportunity to reaffirm my country's commitment to general disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker in the general exchange of views today. I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. In that connection, I would like to remind delegations that the number of interventions in exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting is limited to two. The first intervention should be limited to 10 minutes, and the second to 5 minutes.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): At this afternoon's meeting, the representatives of South Korea and Japan made reference to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, touching upon several issues. Since I have already addressed several of them in my main statement, I will not respond to every issue in this right of reply. There are, however, two things I would like to mention.

First, the representative of South Korea talked about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapon denuclearization. As I said in my main statement, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea National Defence Commission advanced crucial proposals for national security and peace on the Korean peninsula. One of the key proposals contained therein was on the issue of not allowing external nuclear strike means to enter the territory of the Korean peninsula — not to allow external nuclear weapons onto the land of the Korean peninsula — which embodies and reflects the desire for denuclearization on the part of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and of the entire Korean nation.

In my main statement, I also drew the Commission's attention to the issue of over six decades' long nuclear threats against the Korean nation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In 1957, the Government of the United States introduced the first nuclear weapon into South Korea, and had increased their number to more than 1,000 by the 1970s. In addition, every year, under the pretext of joint drills, as I said, they are escalating tensions with nuclear weapons coming into the land, through B-52s strategic bombers, nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers. They are bringing everything they have to support the means for making a nuclear strike.

Moreover, South Korea is under the nuclear umbrella of the United States. It is very contradictory — while they are under the nuclear umbrella of the United States to protect them from their fellow countrymen, they continue to call for the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Nobody understands the logic behind that. While they are allowing a foreign country's nuclear weapons onto their territory, they do not want their fellow countrymen to possess their own nuclear weapons, which are aimed at safeguarding the national peace and security of all their fellow countrymen, and of the region and the world as a whole. I therefore recommend that South Korea carefully study the background of the origin of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

Secondly, rocket launches and supposed missile launches are an issue that has drawn the attention of the delegations. On 23 March, South Korea launched ballistic missiles with a range of 500 kilometres, which they kept secret. After 10 days, they made the launch public. If we consider the date that the United States raised the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea missile launch in the Security Council — 28 March — it is not hard to imagine how it can do that: double standards.

Indeed, the United States has a very strange double standard criteria with respect to nuclear and missile proliferation. When the country in question is an ally of the United States, for example Israel or South Korea, it is encouraged to have nuclear weapons, in order to increase the range of rocket launches. But when the country in question is an enemy or is not aligned with United States policy, straightaway it becomes an issue that is raised in the Security Council.

That gives rise to a question. Why did the United States raise the issue of the rocket launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's in the Security Council on 28 March yet remain silent about South Korea's launch five days earlier?

Mr. Lim Sang Beom (Republic of Korea): With regard to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I would like to exercise my right of reply in response to his arguments.

First of all, North Korea has been under sanctions of the Security Council due to its nuclear tests and launches of long-range ballistic missiles in defiance of international norms. The relevant Security Council resolutions, such as resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013) and 2094 (2013), clearly stipulate that North Korea shall not conduct any further launches that use ballistic missile technology. Therefore, the recent ballistic missile launches by North Korea are flagrant violations of Security Council resolutions, as we stated at the time. In contrast, our recent missile test was conducted in full compliance with international norms. North Korea's argument is therefore groundless and unfounded.

Regarding the joint Republic of Korea/United States military exercises, I would like to state the following. The joint exercises have been conducted annually for several decades and are purely defensive in nature. They are designed to enhance our combined readiness against North Korea's military provocations and threats. The exercises have contributed to the deterrence of war on the Korean peninsula. The United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission has notified North Korea every year in advance of the exercise with the date and the fact that it is defensive in nature as well as the fact that the exercise is not in

response to the current security situation on the Korean peninsula. In addition, the exercise has been conducted with the supervision of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. North Korea has annually issued a trite and inflammatory statement on the joint exercise even though it also conducts its own annual winter exercises at the national level.

Furthermore, with respect to the assertion by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that a nuclear arsenal is being brought into Korea, we would respond by stating that there are no nuclear weapons within our territory. It remains our unchanged policy to observe and implement the 1992 Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, to which North Korea is also party.

Finally, I would like to mention that, pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions and the Joint Statement dated 19 September 2005, North Korea is obligated to abandon all nuclear weapons and its existing nuclear programme, including its uranium enrichment programme. The most recently adopted Security Council resolution on this issue, resolution 2094 (2013), made that obligation even clearer. North Korea should clearly understand that it cannot obtain anything by developing its nuclear programme.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I have listened again to the clumsy and ridiculous arguments of the representative of South Korea, which do not make sense and lack logic. They brought in nuclear weapons from the United States in 1957. They have 1,000 nuclear weapons on Korean territory. Is there any country that would allow this kind of stockpiling of nuclear weapons against one nation for more than six decades? South Korea is the only country that allows weapons from outside in its territory, and which are a threat to the survival of the Korean community as a nation.

This is a question for South Korea that I want an answer on from its representative. The resolution concerned is illegal and very clumsy, and once again was manipulated by the United States. The United States never raised the issue of South Korea's uranium enrichment, which was disclosed several times. It never raised the issue of Israel's nuclear weapons with the Security Council. It singled out the Democratic People's Republic of Korea alone. It even made an issue of a satellite launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is a matter of everyday practice for peaceful purposes.

Two years ago we launched a satellite in an open and transparent manner, notifying all neighbouring countries and international organizations. We even invited reporters from the international mass media. We were more transparent than anybody. But the United States again raised the issue with the Security Council and adopted the resolution to which the representative of South Korea referred. That is totally illegal. Our satellite launch was conducted as a sovereign State's full exercise of its right to legitimate space activities. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a State party to the Outer Space Treaty, an international multilateral treaty. After the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch in December 2012, South Korea launched a satellite. That was not raised with the Security Council. Japan launched one. That was not raised.

Again, all of that shows the United States double standards and abuse of power — a so-called responsible, permanent member of the Security Council that is interested only in its own selfish political and strategic interests, thereby undermining the credibility of the United Nations and the Security Council, whose mission is to maintain international peace and security.

Concerning the issue of the joint military drills, he again made another ridiculous and routine argument. This is going on right now. The international community is watching this exercise closely. It is escalating tension in the Korean peninsula, creating a response from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and it is being raised with the Security Council as an act of provocation. Why are they not being reported to the Security Council? The United States should be number one on the list for being reported to the Security Council.

Mr. Lim Sang Beom (Republic of Korea): I would like to make some clarifications regarding the accusations made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Our position is clear — the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy is reserved for countries that faithfully implement their obligations under the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and within the regime established by the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). North Korea, which withdrew from the NPT and conducted nuclear tests in violation of Security Council resolutions, is not entitled to such a right.

Regarding the right to peaceful uses of outer space, I would like to make it clear that Security Council resolutions — for example, resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009) — have stipulated that North Korea is not entitled to any launch using ballistic missile technology. North Korea resorted to sophistry and continued with its violations. As a result, the Council was obliged to further spell out in a presidential statement in April 2012 (S/PRST/2012/13) that North Korea's launches were serious violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions, even when they were characterized as satellite launch or space launch vehicles.

The representative of North Korea has repeatedly said that his country categorically rejects the Security Council's resolutions, and that it is not bound by any of those obligations. I would like to make it clear that according to Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Council. Furthermore, Article 48, paragraph 1, states that the action required to carry out the decisions of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security shall be taken by all the Members of the United Nations. According to Chapter VII of the Charter, all Members — which includes the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — must carry out their obligations in accordance with Security Council resolutions. Article 4 of the Charter clearly restricts membership of the United Nations to peace-loving States that accept and carry out their obligations. North Korea cannot accept one while rejecting the other.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.

United Nations A/CN.10/PV.339

General Assembly

Official Records

Disarmament Commission

339th meeting

Tuesday, 8 April 2014, 10 a.m.

New York

Chair: Mr. Drobnjak . . . . . (Croatia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

General debate (*continued*)

Mr. Montaño (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since the Commission last met, there have been several landmark events on the disarmament and non-proliferation scene that have set a pattern for the value of multilateralism as the principle under which we must build new agreements in order to achieve a safer and peaceful world. The Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons conducted a dialogue on how to attain and sustain a world free of nuclear weapons. We hope that the Commission will review the conclusions of the report (A/68/514) as input for its deliberations.

The High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, held last September, showed us that most nations uphold their commitment to nuclear disarmament. During that same session of meetings, the Non-Aligned Movement submitted a draft resolution that set out actions as follow-up to the High-level Meeting, which we hope that will be discussed at this session of the Commission.

Following the terrible scenes of suffering in Syria, that country's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention was clearly an important step towards the universalization of that instrument. As a member of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Mexico supported the historic decision on the prompt destruction of chemical weapons in Syria, for which an unprecedented plan for the unimpeded destruction of its nuclear aresenals, monitored by and under the oversight of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, was established. The Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the OPCW in 2013 is clear proof of the value of the diplomatic path, the international standard on the prohibition of such inhumane arms and the invaluable role of the strict multilateral verification systems.

Mexico welcomes the first anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty and affirms its commitment to the Treaty's early entry into force and full implementation. The international community now faces the challenge of implementing the system established by the Treaty. Mexico therefore hopes to host the first conference of States parties to the Treaty in order to build a comprehensive regime to counteract the consequences of the illicit trade in conventional weapons in our societies.

At the second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, which took place in my country in February, 146 Governments, eight international bodies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and 61 civil society organizations actively participated in the discussion on the effect of nuclear weapons in a format that, unfortunately, cannot be applied to multilateral forums within the disarmament machinery, given, for example, that civil society cannot take part. Various aspects were addressed with regard to the possible devastating humanitarian consequences

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of a nuclear explosion, as well as the high risk of such an explosion occurring.

The working sessions of the Conference demonstrated with scientific data the lethal or harmful effects that the detonation on any nuclear weapon, whether intentional or accidental, would have on areas such as public health, climate change, food security, development, economic growth and population displacement. The Conference also addressed the risks of detonation and the lack of capacity in the humanitarian response that the international community would face if there were such a disaster. A great majority of participants called for substantive progress on nuclear disarmament by establishing new international standards and parameters in order to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The final document of the Nayarit Conference sets out the debates and a draft road map for participants to make the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons the keystone of disarmament efforts. We have presented that document for the Commission's deliberation and call on everyone to analyse it.

More than four decades since the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) came into being, its objectives have still not been met. While we value greater developments in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament remains a pending issue for certain State parties to the NPT. Until that goal is achieved, Mexico will continue to condemn the existence, possession, production, development and use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We have said that the only guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons and the damage that they cause is their total elimination.

In that regard, we welcome initiatives for inclusive participation that allow for progress to be made towards the prohibition and definitive elimination of nuclear weapons through multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations under the principles of verification, irreversibility and transparency. One of the most effective ways that Mexico has identified to develop trust and transparency among countries is cooperation with regional and international bodies through the submission to them of appropriate, clear and transparent information.

A safe world of lasting peace cannot be based on weapons, in particular weapons of mass destruction, or on the threat of the use of force. The existence of 17,000 nuclear weapons absurdly contradicts the objectives that we have set at the United Nations as we consider new development goals. Mexico deeply regrets that the United Nations disarmament machinery continues to not meet its mandate. We have underscored that multilateral forums should foster and not inhibit deliberations and the decision-making process. We hope that the Commission's work at this sesssion will realize the potential of this body and deliver conclusions and recommendations that brinmg us closer to a more peaceful and safer world.

Ms. González Román (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Disarmament Commission, as well as the others members of the Bureau. Spain expresses its readiness to work closely with you in order to achieve a satisfactory result at this third session of the cycle.

We would also like to express our thanks and appreciation for the work done by the outgoing Chair of the Commisssion, Ambassador Christopher Grima of Malta, and by the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Norway for their leadership of the working groups.

With regard to the first agenda item for this session, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", my delegation would like to underscore that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, based on its three complementary pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, is the most valuable instrument we have. It is an irreplaceable framework for the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and stability and for overcoming the current challenges in the area of international security, in particular the threat of proliferation. The plan of action adopted at the 2010 Review Conference provides us with an essential road map that focuses on maintaining and strengthening the commitment to disarmament through the assumption by nuclear-weapon States of new disarmament obligations and the adoption of transparency measures in accordance with article 6 of the NPT.

We also believe that convening a conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is key to increasing the security and stability of the region in the international context, as nuclear-weapon-free zones have in other

regions. Aware of the complexity of the process, we support the efforts being made to that end.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is of crucial importance to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. It is urgent to achieve the ratifications necessary for it to enter into force. Moreover, we also believe that it is urgent to launch negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The effective operation of the multilateral disarmament institutions is a guarantee for collective security. Last year, various initiatives were adopted through General Assembly resolutions on nuclear disarmament, in particular resolution 68/32 on the follow-up to the 2013 High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament and resolution 68/46 on the establishmen of an open-ended working group. In order to achieve progress in that area, we believe that an inclusive and constructive focus is necessary. It is also essential that we can count on the nuclear-weapon States and move forward through practical and effective measures, while assuming commitments to disarmament and transparency measures.

Like many other countries, Spain is aware that it is also possible to address the disastrous humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in the context of the NPT, as acknowledged in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference. Awareness of such an impact, analysed extensively at the Oslo and Nayarit conferences, requires us to fully implement the NPT plan of action. To that end, in April we are holding an important meeting in New York, namely, the third Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. It will be a new opportunity for us to make a joint effort and reaffirm the obligations under the Treaty as a cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and a fundamental instrument for moving forward on the nuclear disarmament agenda.

With regard to the agenda item of Working Group II, "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons", Spain is firmly committed to that goal, which requires an appropriate response at the international and regional levels. The current state of affairs underscores the importance of transparency regimes and confidence-building measures in preventing tension, as well as the adoption of inclusive measures that take into account all political and regional sensibilities as a means of establishing mutual trust.

Some recent developments in the area of conventional weapons are encouraging and will help to strengthen trust. In April 2013, the Arms Trade Treaty, which was adopted by a large majority, established a sound policy framework for regulating international trade in conventional arms. Spain has just ratified the Treaty and hopes that it will enter into force soon. The Security Council also adopted resolution 2117 (2013) on the non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons, which Spain co-sponsored and is a real milestone in the field. We consider the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to be an essential tool, and we support the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument.

I would also mention that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its facilitation of information on small arms and light weapons are key to fostering an atmosphere of trust and security to which greater transparency in military expenditures could also contribute. Finally, I note that, at the last session, the European Union submitted a working paper designed to share ideas and reflections on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons with other delegations.

We hope that the work of the Disarmament Commission will deliver long-awaited results this year. We are willing to work with other delegations to find the necessary consensus and overcome obstacles that have prevented it from adequately fulfilling its mandate, so that it can not only discuss but also make recommendations on the two items on the Commission's agenda.

Mr. Al-Hakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset, on behalf of the delegation of Iraq, to sincerely congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its 2014 session and address my congratulations to the members of the Bureau. Wishing you all success in your task, Mr. Chair, my delegation is prepared to cooperate and support you in your mission to achieve significant results. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The delegation of Iraq affirms the important role played by the Disarmament Commission, the sole

specialized deliberative body within the United Nations disarmament machinery. The importance of that role has grown with the increasing complexity of international affairs and as regional problems, threats of terrorism, the dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the freeze in disarmament activities endanger international peace. We must therefore intensify our efforts if we are to realize our objectives and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

Many countries support Iraq in its position that, in order to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons and achieve nuclear disarmament, all countries must join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and submit their nuclear facilities and programmes to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) so that the peaceful purposes of such programmes can be verified.

I avail myself of this opportunity to emphasize the inalienable right of all States, especially developing States, to develop, produce and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes in order achieve economic growth without discrimination or obstacles, provided that all such activities are subject to the supervision of the IAEA and the provisions of the NPT regime. The Government of Iraq is aware that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons can guarantee the international community against the use or threat of use of such weapons, together with negotiations in a multilateral forum dedicated to ensuring international peace and security through common, practical solutions and agreements. Consequently, Iraq has joined all agreements on disarmament, the most recent of which was the CTBT, which we signed on 26 September 2013, the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Furthermore, on behalf of my delegation, I welcome the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament".

With regard to the fifth item on our agenda, Iraq was honoured to submit, on behalf of the League of Arab States and its members, a working paper entitled "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". Iraq believes that the only way to achieve nuclear disarmament is the full and non-selective implementation of the NPT and the realization of its universality. Nuclear disarmament must be at the top of the international community's priorities because the destructive nature presents serious threats to humankind.

At this juncture, like all other members of the international community, Iraq reaffirms its support for urgent and effective measures to bring about the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, and first and foremost nuclear weapons. We urgently call for negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a comprehensive agreement on nuclear weapons that would provide for restrictions on the acquisition, development, production, testing, stockpiling, transportation, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as their destruction. We must also agree on an internationally binding instrument to give unconditional negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States that they will never be subject to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States. But that should not be treated as an alternative to our main objective — the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Iraq is aware of the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as a multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations. At the same time, we express our concern about the present state of the Conference, which has been unable in recent years to fulfil its role in reaching an agreement on its programme of work, its mandate notwithstanding. It is therefore incumbent on us to intensify our efforts to agree on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work with the consensus of all Member States. Iraq was honoured to chair the Conference on Disarmament from 24 June to 18 August 2013. During that session, the Conference endorsed the draft decision on establishing an informal working group with a mandate to produce a programme of work robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation (document CD/1956/Rev.1).

Iraq would like once again to express its support for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones as an important step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons, for building confidence at the regional level and as a potential tool for strengthening the NPT regime. We emphasize the importance of establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Any effort to establish such a zone must be prepared for with basic steps, including by requiring Israel to begin a process of nuclear disarmament and to abide by the NPT, as well

as to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA.

While Iraq is disappointed with the slow pace of international efforts to convene a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, we emphasize the importance of adhering to the mandate of the facilitator and of the countries organizing the postponed conference with the support of the United Nations, as expressed in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We also call on the United Nations and the Secretary-General to play a more effective role in urging the States parties of the region and the organizing countries to make the conference happen.

Regarding confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons, my delegation emphasizes the importance of taking practical and effective steps and of pursuing a comprehensive approach to the practicalities of disarmament. Excessive stockpiling of such weapons damages national, regional and international security as well as socioeconomic and human development efforts. In that regard, Iraq welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty as an additional step in the process of strengthening international peace and security at regional and international levels.

My delegation would like to emphasize the guiding principles outlined by the Disarmament Commission in its report contained in document A/54/42, which discusses limits on conventional weapons in the light of the importance of reducing excessive stocks of such weapons while taking into consideration the legitimate right of Member States to use them for self-defence. My Government considers regulating conventional weapons and establishing confidence-building measures very important, and has thus set up a national commission on conventional weapons and designated a focal point on small arms and light weapons.

The scope of Iraq's efforts to strengthen the universality of the relevant agreements and conventions on conventional weapons was demonstrated in its adherence on 13 May 2013 to the the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which took effect in Iraq in November 2013. On 19 December 2013, the Iraqi Parliament endorsed the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and the Government is now taking the necessary constitutional and legislative measures to complete the process of adhering to it. In its efforts to get rid of the land mines, cluster munitions and explosives left over from the wars the country has suffered, our Government has implemented a comprehensive programme of action, in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme, aimed at ridding itself of those weapons, informing its people about the threats they pose to security and communities, assisting their victims and reintegrating them into society.

Finally, I would like to reiterate Iraq's readiness to make every effort in cooperating with the Commission in order to enable it to adopt recommendations that respond to Member States' concerns.

Mr. León González (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Disarmament Commission for this year's substantive session. We also congratulate the members of the Bureau and wish them every success in discharging their duties, and we assure them of the cooperation of the Cuban delegation.

Cuba fully supports the statements made earlier by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Costa Rica on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

My delegation reaffirms the importance of the Disarmament Commission as a specialized body within the multilateral disarmament machinery of the United Nations that enables us to hold in-depth discussions of specific disarmament issues aimed at producing concrete recommendations in the area. As we all know, we are now in the final year of the current cycle of discussions and we hope this will bring substantive progress resulting in specific recommendations on the two topics under consideration, with a view to submitting them to the General Assembly.

Cuba belongs to a region whose leaders recently gathered in Havana for CELAC's Second Summit, which decided to formally proclaim Latin America and the Caribbean a zone of peace — a historic landmark proclamation that fills us with a healthy sense of pride. At the CELAC Summit, the States of the region reaffirmed their commitment to making a priority of promoting nuclear disarmament. We note that our region was a pioneer in establishing itself as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, and we believe that the

total elimination and prohibition of nuclear weapons is the only sustainable way to ensure international peace and security and the survival of the human race on our planet.

Nothing justifies the existence of more than 17,265 nuclear weapons. Allowing for the possibility of their use is at the very least an irresponsible attitude. We now know for sure that a nuclear mushroom cloud today would result in a genocide far greater than that which was responsible for the sorrow and suffering of thousands of Japanese families. The existence of broad international support for nuclear disarmament was noted on 26 September at the first-ever High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament, promoted by the Non-Aligned Movement. As we all know, on 5 December the General Assembly decided to request that negotiations aimed at agreement on a comprehensive convention on the total prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons start as soon as possible.

Likewise, the Assembly decided to declare 26 September the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. The Cuban delegation invites Member States, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, parliamentarians, media organizations and private individuals to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the goal of which is to mobilize international efforts to achieve the common objective of a world free of nuclear weapons.

In support of the priority objective of achieving nuclear disarmament, we draw attention to the working papers of the session under the topic, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", which we hope will receive the immediate backing of all delegations. Quick progress is urgently needed to ensure the full implementation by nuclear weapon States of their commitment to attain the priority goal of nuclear disarmament and the elimination and prohibition of nuclear weapons through irreversible, transparent and verifiable initiatives.

Cuba expresses its opposition to the refining and modernization of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new nuclear weapons, which are inconsistent with the obligations of nuclear disarmament. We also oppose all nuclear testing, including the use of super-computers and other sophisticated non-explosive methods. Our country reiterates the need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines and security policies. Cuba demands an end to political manipulation with respect to non-proliferation based on double standards and the existance of an elite club that continues to refine its nuclear weapons while calling into question the inalienable right of the peoples of the countries of the South to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Our country demands that the nuclear-weapon States fulfil the commitments taken under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), immediately implement the 13 practical measures agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament, and implement the plan of action adopted at the 2010 Review Conference. We reaffirm the inalienable right of States to the development, research, production and peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II , III and IV of the NPT. We also reaffirm the commitment of all signatory parties to the Treaty to facilitate the exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information regarding peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

My country is concerned about the failure to implement the agreement on the convening of an international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We reiterate that the holding of such a conference is an important and essential part of the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. In addition to making an important contribution to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament, the establishment of such a zone would represent an essential step forward in the peace process in the Middle East. Cuba urges the parties to convene the conference without delay, in accordance with the commitments made by States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

With respect to practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, Cuba considers those voluntary measures to be a good way to strengthen international peace and security and that they should be adopted in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respect for the particular security concerns of States. Cuba recognizes the contribution of confidence-building measures to disarmament and

arms control, while reiterating that they are not an alternative to disarmament.

It would represent a failure of the Commission and a lack of commitment to disarmament if the countries represented here did not manifest sufficient political will to achieve concrete results on the two substantive issues before the Commission. We believe it is up to us to change things and to start moving forward. On behalf of the Cuban delegation, I reiterate our readiness to promote success in our work. It is our hope that the Disarmament Commission will be able to recommend concrete proposals to the General Assembly by the end of the cycle.

Mr. Khalil (Egypt): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to preside over this year's substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). I would like also to commend your predecessor, Mr. Christopher Grima of Malta, for chairing the past session of the Commission. Likewise, I extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau on their election and to the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Norway on chairing the Working Groups. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

At the outset, I associate Egypt's position with the positions reflected in the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Nigeria, on behalf of the African Group (see A/CN.10/PV.337), and that to be delivered by the representative of Oman on behalf of the Arab Group.

This year is particularly important for the UNDC, as it brings to closure the current cycle. A successful outcome would require consensus on the issues discussed by the two Working Groups, namely, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons". A consensus substantive outcome will be most important this year if we are to preserve the relevance of the UNDC to the multilateral machinery on disarmament, especially given the successive failures of the past cycles of the UNDC to adopt an outcome since 1999. We call upon nuclear-weapon States and major arms exporters to display the necessary political will to facilitate reaching a substantive outcome on the two important issues before the Commission's agenda in order to activate the potential of the UNDC in furthering the cause of disarmament.

I will begin with the topic of the first Working Group, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". The starting point in that regard should be the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/32, "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", held on 26 September 2013. The resolution charts a road map towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The UNDC should be ready to play its part in deliberating on the implementation of the road map, especially with regard to the elements of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

Egypt welcomes the renewed momentum towards reviving the international debate on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the incompatibility of their use with international humanitarian law. We support the call of the second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons for the development of a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. We urge nuclear-weapon States, especially those that did not participate in the first and second Conferences, in Norway and Mexico, to actively take part in the third Conference, to be held in Austria. As owners of nuclear weapons, they bear a special responsibility in avoiding any possibility of what would be a catastrophe.

The universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an indispensable step to achieve comprehensive and complete nuclear disarmament.

The speedy establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones adds impetus to efforts aimed at achieving the wider objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. The international community has recognized the urgency of the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Yet, despite those repeated calls and the overwhelming global support for the establishment of the zone, the conference for the establishment of the zone was not convened in 2012 as mandated by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The continued failure to convene the Conference puts into question the credibility and relevance of the NPT review process, if not the Treaty itself. The current session of the Disarmament Commission provides a timely opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the international community to bringing the process back on track. It provides an adequate forum to reflect on how to break the current stalemate.

Egypt has spared no effort in playing its part to advance the process of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. I refer here in particular to the initiative launched by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt before the General Assembly on 28 September 2013 (see A/68/PV.18). That initiative has garnered letters of support from the States of the region that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Those letters were compiled in a note by the Secretary-General (A/68/781). We call on the permanent members of the Security Council and the remaining State in the region that is not party to the NPT to follow suit in endorsing the initiative by sending letters to the Secretary-General confirming their commitment to the establishment of the zone, as called for by the initiative.

Egypt is fully committed to international efforts aimed at preventing non-State actors from gaining access to nuclear weapons and related material and technology. Three nuclear security summits addressed measures aimed at securing the physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities. Egypt is of the view that the International Atomic Energy Agency is the main multilateral forum for discussing matters related to nuclear security and establishing standards and regulations in that field. Concerns about nuclear security should not be invoked to preclude the legitimate right of States to the development, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with article IV of the NPT.

The deliberations of the second Working Group of the Disarmament Commission on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons assume increasing importance in the light of the upcoming convening of the Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. By contributing to the debate on confidence-building measures, the Disarmament Commission will be helping to address areas of concern related to conventional weapons, including the salient issue of small arms and light weapons.

We have consistently called for the following elements as integral components of any possible confidence-building measures: subjecting the over-production and ever-increasing stockpiles of conventional weapons in the hands of major arms exporters and producers to international scrutiny; ensuring mutual international accountability as the only guarantee against the potential abuse of the existing imbalance between major arms producers and the rest of the world; and addressing protracted threats to international peace and security. In that regard, there is no more profound threat to peace and stability, international law, international humanitarian law, human rights law and the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations itself than crimes of aggression and foreign occupation that employ weapons arsenals to threaten and dominate peoples and deny them their most basic human rights. By developing such confidence-building measures, the Disarmament Commission will be refining the traditional meaning of the term, thereby contributing at the conceptual level to enhancing international peace, security and stability.

Egypt stands ready to contribute constructively to the deliberations to ensure a balanced outcome between the results of the two Working Groups that reflects a balance between the interests of all States. We are confident in your ability, Sir, to steer the discussions towards a successful outcome to this cycle.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): India would like to join other delegations in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) for this session. We would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election. You can be assured of the full support of my delegation in the discharge of your responsibilities.

I would also like to say, at the outset, that India associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

India attaches high importance to the Disarmament Commission as the specialized deliberative pillar of the triad of disarmament machinery entities put in place by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. As the only body for in-depth deliberations on relevant disarmament issues with

universal membership, the Commission plays a unique role.

We share the disappointment over the Disarmament Commission's inability to adopt substantive recommendations for over a decade. However, we continue to believe in the inherent value of this forum. It is important to recall that the Commission has had several successes in the past, when it was able to adopt principles, guidelines and recommendations on specific disarmament issues. It is up to us, the Member States, to translate the potential the value of the Disarmament Commission into reality by giving importance to its work and showing greater political commitment on disarmament issues.

At this stage, we would like to share some thoughts on the two issues on our agenda. We will further elaborate on our positions in the meetings of the two Working Groups in the coming weeks.

We attach importance to the agenda item "Recommendations fo achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". The complete elimination of nuclear weapons is a long-cherished goal of the international community. The General Assembly, in its very first resolution (resolution 1 (I)), adopted unanimously in 1946, sought the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction. The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2), adopted by consensus by the international community, also accorded the highest priority to nuclear disarmament.

India attaches the highest priority to global, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament, a principle that has strong and consistent domestic support in our country. India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is a need for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons in order to build trust and confidence and to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines.

The Prime Minister of India, when inaugurating a conference entitled "A Nuclear-Weapons-Free World: From Conception to Reality" in New Delhi on 2 April, stressed the need to bring Cold War thinking to an end, and said,

> "What is needed today is an agreed multilateral framework that can involve all States possessing nuclear weapons. What is needed is to focus on practical measures that reduce nuclear dangers by reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines."

In the current international climate, there is great support for progressive steps towards the delegitimization of nuclear weapons. Measures to reduce nuclear danger arising from accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons are pertinent in that regard. India's draft resolutions in the First Committee express some of those ideas and have found support from a large number of States. Our working paper, which was developed in the spirit of the 1988 Rajiv Gandhi action plan and submitted to the United Nations Disarmament Commission in April 2007, also suggested specific measures, including a global no-first-use agreement and a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

We believe that the UNDC must send a strong signal of the international community's resolve to achieve the goal of global, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. Member States should use this forum to intensify dialogue in that regard. We can demonstrate our commitment by adopting consensus recommendations on the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

With regard to the second issue for discussion, "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventiona' weapons", India supports practical confidence-building measures initiatives (CBMs), whether unilateral, bilateral, regional or global. We believe that CBMs can build trust and confidence and enhance transparency to minimize misunderstandings and misperceptions, thereby promoting an environment conducive to peace and security among States. India has initiated several CBMs with the countries in our neighbourhood.

We believe that the initiation of a confidence-building process must be freely decided upon by States and in the exercise of their sovereignty. Confidence-building must be a step-by-step process and should evolve at a pace comfortable to all participating States. CBMs in specific regions should fully take into account the political, military and other conditions prevailing in the

region. CBMs in a regional context should be adopted upon the initiative and with the agreement of the States of the region concerned. In elaborating practical CBMs in the area of conventional weapons, we should take advantage of the guidelines on CBMs endorsed by the General Assembly at its forty-first session on the recommendation of the UNDC.

We believe that a significant amount of work needs to be accomplished on that agenda item in our meetings this year. We also believe that discussions on CBMs in the field of conventional weapons should not become a tool for promoting instruments that do not enjoy universal support.

As the final year of this cycle of UNDC meetings, it will be crucial for us to be able to adopt substantive recommendations this year. We hope to have in-depth exchanges of views on all aspects related to the agenda items and are hopeful that good progress will be made in our work.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am very pleased to see you, Sir, chairing our meeting. I heartily congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for 2014. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I take this opportunity to express my full appreciation to Mr. Christopher Grima, Permanent Representative of Malta, for his excellent stewardship of the Commission last year.

At the outset, I associate myself with the statements made by the representatives of Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States, and of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/CN.10/PV.337), as well as with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Sultanate of Oman on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

In reaffirming the importance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized deliberative body within the United Nations disarmament machinery, Libya deplores the Commission's decade-long inability to achieve consensus. The Commission has limited itself to adopting guiding principles on nuclear-weapon-free zones and conventional weapons. Libya believes that the political will of States should enable the Commission to shurg off its current inertia. Accordingly, we hope to reach agreement in our work at this session and adopt some practical measures. I would also like to reaffirm the absolute need to raise the Conference on Disarmament from its current impasse, which is the result of a lack of political will of certain parties. We reaffirm the need for urgent measures to be taken to allow the Conference to play its full role in negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

At this session, the Commission is addressing two issues, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons". On the first, despite the efforts and progress made in the field of disarmament in the past decade, the risk of the use of nuclear weapons is still real. There is no doubt at this point that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee that they will not be used and that there will be no threat of their use. As a result, we reaffirm the importance for nuclear-weapon States to renounce their nuclear weapons programmes, as Libya, South Africa, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus have done on their own initiative.

We also call for the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as soon as possible in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. We reaffirm the need for nuclear-weapon States to live up to their international commitments under article VI of the NPT. We call on them to implement the outcome of the 1995 NPT Review Conference, the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Libya affirms the importance of the first High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11). We welcome the adoption of resolution 68/32 as the outcome of the meeting. We also reiterate our full support for international plans to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone throughout the world as a step towards eliminating the horror of such weapons. In order to achieve that objective, we urge all parties that were to convene the 2012 conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which still has not been held, to spare no effort and to increase cooperation in order to implement in 2015 such a decision pursuant to the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We call on the parties concerned to strive to hold the conference before the end of the year and to convince all stakeholders in the region to fully participate in order to ensure its success and to achieve its objectives.

In that context, we welcome Egypt's initiative, put forward on 28 September 2013 at the current session of the General Assembly (see A/68/PV.18), which includes tangible measures to support regional and international efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In that regard, we draw attention to the letter addressed to the Secretary-General from the States members of the League of Arab States, including Libya and Iran, as contained in document A/68/781, in which those States reiterate their support for that region becoming a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

With regard to practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, I would like to reiterate our support for the practical initiatives in that area. We are convinced that they will increase transparency and will establish an environment conducive to moving forward in the area of disarmament. Such tools therefore serve to strengthen the maintenance of international peace and security. We would like to reiterate that we are satisfied with the General Assembly's adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty on 2 April 2013.

The Commission of course knows that Libya suffers greatly from land mines and unexploded remnants of war dating back to the Second World War, as well as land mines planted by the former dictator Al-Qadhafi. During the fighting, the regime placed tens of thousands of land mines. The United Nations and many non-governmental organizations are now helping the Libyan authorities in their attempts to remove the remaining mines and weapons stockpiles. Assistance is also being provided to those who have suffered as a result of such weapons in order to reintegrate them into society.

Libya reiterates its full support for the Conference on Disarmament and international and multilateral cooperation and policies to move our agenda forward and to effectively achieve the disarmament goals. We have confidence in your experience, Sir, and note that it will enable us to achieve tangible results in that area. We affirm our cooperation in ensuring the success of this session.

Ms. Telford (United Kingdom): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship and assure you of the full support of the United Kingdom delegation.

The United Kingdom remains absolutely committed to the long-term goal of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. The United Kingdom recognizes that, along with the other nuclear-weapon States, we have particular responsibilities, which we take seriously. The United Kingdom has already unilaterally disarmed further than any other nuclear-weapon State, to a minimal credible deterrent.

We have a strong record of fulfilling our nuclear disarmament commitments and of meeting the international legal obligations as a member of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We also have a strong record of transparency on the capabilities that we possess and the limited part that such capability plays in our defence doctrine. In our 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review we openly reported on our ongoing disarmament measures.

Unilateral action is only one part of the process towards a world without nuclear weapons. All of us here today need to focus on our shared commitment to building an international environment in which no State feels the need to possess nuclear weapons and where States with nuclear weapons can disarm in a balanced and verifiable manner. Building the right international environment involves many steps, not least including the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We urge all States that have not done so to sign the Treaty and to ratify it as soon as possible, in particular those States whose signature is required for it to enter into force. We congratulate Guinea-Bissau, Iraq and Niue on their ratification during the past year.

Starting negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is another essential step that the United Kingdom fully supports. We hope that the meeting of the FMCT Group of Government Experts this month can take positive steps towards that aim by making recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to a treaty. The P-5 process is also key to finding a realistic and sustainable way forward on our commitments towards multilateral disarmament. We instigated that process in 2009 to build trust and confidence among the nuclear-weapon States and to encourage transparency. Also this month, the P-5 will hold their fifth conference in Beijing.

The NPT action plan agreed in 2010, which covers all three pillars of the NPT, was a major achievement. As we move towards the NPT Review Conference

in 2015, we call on all States parties to demonstrate their commitment to implementing the action plan. We will report United Kingdom progress against the 2010 action plan at the NPT Preparatory Committee at the end of this month. The United Kingdom looks forward to hearing from other States on their progress, in accordance with action point 20.

The United Kingdom will also take the opportunity to report further at the NPT Preparatory Committee on our work with Norway on the verification of warhead dismantlement. That is a unique initiative by a nuclear-weapon State to carry out such work with a non-nuclear-weapon State. We believe that the lessons learned in that initiative will add a significant policy and technical contribution to nuclear disarmament, investigating and developing prototype, technology and procedures that could be used in a future verification regime.

The United Kingdom believes that nuclear-weapon-free zones contribute greatly to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to enhancing regional and international security. We remain committed to signing the protocols to the Central Asian and South-East Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties as soon as possible.

The United Kingdom also remains committed to the objective of achieving a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. We regret that a conference was not convened in 2012 as planned. However, we are encouraged by the informal consultations that have taken place over the past six months, and we look forward to convening the conference as soon as the States in the region can agree on arrangements.

Agreeing on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) last year represented a significant outcome for the international community at the end of what was a long and challenging process. The Treaty introduces robust, effective and legally binding controls on the international trade in weapons. The United Kingdom ratified the Treaty, along with 17 other States, on 2 April and will provisionally implement articles 6 and 7, pending the Treaty's entry into force. We welcome all those countries that have ratified, and encourage those that have not ratified to do so as soon as they are able. The United Kingdom will work, including alongside the European Union, to support other Member States in ratifying and implementing the ATT. We hope and expect to pass the 50 ratifications necessary for its entry into force this year.

In the hands of criminal gangs, terrorists or armed groups, small arms and light weapons kill about 1,000 people each day and injure hundreds of thousands more each year. Small arms and light weapons undermine peace, reconstruction, security, stability and human rights. The violence caused by them destroys livelihoods, displaces entire communities and hampers social and economic development. The international community has a responsibility to combat and eradicate the illegal manufacturing and trafficking of those weapons.

The United Kingdom has contributed to international efforts by promoting the transparency of trade through information returns, actively helping regional and global organizations to highlight and tackle the illicit trade and funding non-governmental organizations' work to assist vulnerable countries to carry out their work on the issue of small arms and light weapons.

Finally, the United Kingdom remains resolute in its pledge to put to an end for all time to the suffering and casualties caused by cluster munitions. The United Kingdom withdrew all cluster munitions from operational service in 2008. By December 2011, two-thirds of these munitions had been destroyed, and in November we destroyed all our remaining stockpiles five years ahead of the deadline set out in the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This bears witness to the strength of our commitment. We encourage all States that have not yet done so to join us in outlawing the use of cluster munitions.

I will conclude by reiterating that the United Kingdom is committed to the entire United Nations disarmament machinery, as established under tenth special session of the General Assembly, including the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We recognize that over the past few years, the Commission has not been working as it should be, and we support any discussion among Member States designed at identifying practical ways of improving its methods of work.

Mr. Toro-Carnevali (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of Costa Rica, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

On behalf of my delegation, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission at this substantive session. We extend our congratulations to the members of the Bureau. We also wish to thank Ambassador Christopher Grima of Malta for his tireless efforts as Chair of the Disarmament Commission last year.

My country reiterates its full commitment to multilateral diplomacy in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, we stress the importance of the Disarmament Commission, with its universal membership, as the sole specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery, charged with considering specific disarmament issues and with formulating recommendations to the General Assembly. In that regard, allow me to reiterate my country's willingness to work constructively with all other Member States under your leadership, Sir, in our efforts to fulfil the complex tasks entrusted to the Commission.

We join those speakers who have previously emphasized the humanitarian, socioeconomic, security, environmental and moral reasons that require us to move towards a world free of nuclear weapons. In that context, my delegation takes this opportunity to recall the importance of the first High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) on 26 September 2013. We wish to highlight in particular the high level of participation and the broad support shown by the participants in favour of the complete and total elimination of nuclear weapons. The Meeting served to reaffirm that nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority of the international community.

We also welcome the adoption of resolution 68/32, "Follow-up to the 2013 the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", including the call to start negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a convention on the prohibition of the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We call on Member States represented here to start work without further delay on the guidelines for such an important and essential convention. My delegation also reaffirms, in the context of the adoption of resolution 68/32, its full commitment to the decision to convene no later than 2018 a high-level United Nations conference on nuclear disarmament.

The delegation of Venezuela wishes to recall, as have other countries of the region, the historic decision of the Heads of State and of Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Havana at the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States on January, to declare Latin America and the Caribbean a zone of peace and to reaffirm the ongoing commitment of the region to the peaceful settlement of disputes.

As members of the first densely populated area in the world to be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, we stress that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones constitutes an essential contribution to achieving nuclear disarmament. In that regard, my country deeply regrets the failure to agree on the holding of an international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and urges the organizers to convene the conference on an urgent basis in accordance with what was agreed by the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

My delegation believes that practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons play an important role in the promotion of understanding, transparency and cooperation among States and in increasing stability and security, always in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, respecting their voluntary nature and the specific situations and concerns of States on security issues. My country notes that it has been working with the other nations of the Union of South American Nations to promote a series of confidence- and security-building measures, including on information exchanges on defence spending and military activities, and measures promoting guarantees, compliance and verification. It is a process that is promising for regional and international peace and security.

My delegation associates itself with all Member States that have highlighted the need to redouble our commitments and political will to multilateral disarmament machinery.

In conclusion, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates its full support for the Disarmament Commission and calls for intensified efforts to achieve a significant result that allows us to make progress on

both horizontal and vertical nuclear disarmament and non- proliferation.

Mr. Bertoux (France) (*spoke in French*): France aligns itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union. I would also like to congratulate you, Sir, on your appointment as Chair of the Disarmament Commission at this session.

I would like to clarify a few points concerning the French position.

We hope that the third session of the Disarmament Commission for this cycle will be in line with the positive momentum of the past few years, which has included the entry into force of the New START treaty, the progress made on the agenda of the Nuclear Security Summits, the signing of the Arms Trade Treaty, and the adoption of the joint action plan by the E3+3 Governments and Iran. This shows that when a constructive and pragmatic spirit reigns, we can make concrete progress on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. It also shows that the search for a safer world must be addressed in a comprehensive manner and efforts should be made in all areas, including on nuclear, chemical, biological, conventional weapon, ballistic missile and space issues.

In the year since the most recent session of the Disarmament Commission, there have been undeniable successes but also unacceptable developments. Let us start with the successes.

First, the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty in April 2013 was a historic development in international law. It is the first major treaty adopted within the United Nations in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation since 1996. The Treaty establishes universal norms to regulate the arms trade and prevent illegal trafficking. Those norms will strengthen peace and international security. The Treaty also places international humanitarian law and international human rights law at the heart of criteria that States parties undertake to respect. The Treaty is the best evidence of the effective multilateralism that France fervently hopes for. France proudly deposited its instrument of ratification to the Treaty last week, together with 17 other Member States, bringing the total number of ratifications to 31. The entry into force of the Treaty is now within reach, and we can realistically expect it to occur this year.

We should also note the success of the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague on 24 and 25 March, where 35 heads of State signed the Summit's joint communiqué, pledging to strengthen the security of civilian facilities and the storage and transport of fissile materials to prevent terrorist risks.

However, we must not deceive ourselves. There have also been unacceptable and worrying developments this year.

While the third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention was concluded successfully in April 2013, we learned with horror of the Syrian Government's repeated use of chemical weapons against its own people, culminating in the Al-Ghouta chemical attack of 21 August 2013. The strong response of the international community, in particular France, led to the adoption of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), forcing Syria to dismantle its chemical weapons under the supervision of the joint mission by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations. The mission is making progress, but we remain vigilant and will ensure that the decommissioning is complete and verified over time.

In the nuclear field, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and the foundation of our disarmament efforts. The action plan adopted at the most recent Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, in 2010, is thus our road map. The full implementation of that comprehensive and balanced plan is the responsibility of all States parties, particularly in the lead-up to the 2015 Review Conference.

Nuclear-weapon States, as defined by the NPT, must of course live up to their commitments, and France is aware of its responsibilities as such a State. France's record in terms of nuclear disarmament is exemplary. The irreversible dismantling of our nuclear test site and of our facilities producing fissile material for weapons purposes, the dismantling of the land-based component of our deterrent capacity and the reduction by a third of our oceanic and airborne components are examples that demonstrate our concrete commitment. Our record shows actions, not simply words. The convening of the third follow-up meeting of the permanent five, which will be held in coming days in China, reflects the

seriousness of nuclear-weapon States in implementing the action plan and in terms of their commitments under the NPT.

But we must also strengthen the other aspects of the multilateral framework by bringing all States that have not yet done so, including those listed in annex 2 of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, to sign on to the Treaty. In that regard, we welcome the recent ratification of the Treaty by three States since the Commission's most recent session.

We also need to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons in the Conference on Disarmament. That should be our priority. We hope the Group of Governmental Experts, which has just held its first meeting in Geneva, will then facilitate a rapid launch of negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament on this subject, including stakeholders concerned. Moreover, we take this opportunity to call on all States concerned to establish as soon as possible a moratorium on the production of fissile materials, just as France, the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia have already done.

However, all States must contribute to disarmament by creating the necessary security environment. That will require resolving the two major proliferation crises that now threaten international peace and security. North Korea, to start with, has continued its provocations during 2013 and early this year. Besides its third nuclear test in February 2013, Pyongyang has continued its uranium enrichment activities and relaunched the plutonium reactor at the Yongbyon site. In recent weeks, North Korea has launched several ballistic missiles, including two of medium range. We urge North Korea to comply with its international obligations and to put an end to its bellicose rhetoric.

Discussions on the Iranian nuclear programme have seen encouraging developments in the past year. The adoption of the joint action plan on 24 November 2013, implemented since January, is indeed a step forward for peace and security. For the first time, the E3+3 obtained from Iran a six-month suspension of its most sensitive nuclear programme activities and thereby gained time for negotiations. Dialogue has only started. The joint action plan is only an interim agreement. The Security Council's mandate to the group of six is to find a long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear programme and ensure confidence in its exclusively peaceful purpose. That constitutes the meaning and purpose of the talks between Iran and the group of six that are taking place today and tomorrow in Vienna. We approach these talks with an open mind, as well as open eyes.

Finally, France supports efforts to implement the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. We regret that it was not possible to hold a conference on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East in 2013. We reaffirm our support for the efforts of the facilitator, Mr. Laajava, to ensure that the conference will be held as soon as possible with all the stakeholders concerned. We call on all countries of the region to work constructively in that direction.

France hopes that this session of the Commission will result in a consensus outcome. You can count, Mr. Chair, on my delegation's sincere support in achieving that goal.

Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at its 2014 substantive session. My delegation sincerely hopes that your able leadership will guide the session towards a productive outcome on both items on this year's UNDC agenda and thereby end the 15-year drought in the Commission.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/CN.10/PV.337). However, I will make some points in my national capacity.

The UNDC has already concluded the second year of its three-year cycle. We can hardly afford to waste the final, third year. In fact, we have almost forgotten when the deliberations in the UNDC, the sole deliberative organ of the General Assembly on disarmament, last produced concrete recommendations. Before the UNDC slides into irrelevance, we, the Member States, need to inject a combination of political will and workable working methods into the work of the UNDC, thereby enabling this forum to live up to its mandate.

I will make a few points highlighting our position on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the first item on this year's agenda. First, we believe that the sustenance and proliferation of nuclear arsenals impede the realization of the purposes and are incompatible with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that nuclear weapons are a threat to

humankind. Nuclear and non-nuclear States alike know that fact. We therefore urge all States to work towards the elimination of the threat in good faith — nuclear-weapon States pursing complete, irreversible, verifiable and transparent nuclear disarmament, and non-nuclear-weapon States refraining from seeking nuclear arsenals.

Secondly, we hold that seeking the goals of both disarmament and non-proliferation with an equal sense of importance and urgency is needed to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we reiterate the urgent need to commence negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, as provided in resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament".

Thirdly, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons from the world, non-nuclear-weapon States deserve legally binding protection from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them.

Fourthly, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in accordance with the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) and the 1999 UNDC principles represent useful interim steps towards securing negative security assurances and achieving global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives.

Fifthly, we would like to emphasize the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, in conformity with articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty and in strict compliance with International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and guidelines.

Sixthly, we consider the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which my Government has signed and ratified, to be a critical instrument and an essential step to ensure nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We call upon the eight specific nuclear technology holder countries whose lack of signature and ratification is holding back the CTBT's entry into force to sign and ratify the Treaty urgently and unconditionally.

In spite of living in the shadow of three nuclear Powers, Bangladesh has unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear and shown unequivocal commitment to full compliance with the NPT and the CTBT. We have an impeccable disarmament record. Bangladesh is a party to all disarmament-related treaties including the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Biological Weapons Convention. In the field of conventional weapons, we are also fully committed to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, the United Nations instrument for standardized international reporting of military expenditures and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Equally significantly, we are among the very few Asian countries and the first South Asian country to have signed the Arms Trade Treaty, whose ratification is now being considered in our capital.

It is quite clear to everyone in the Assembly that the UNDC has not been fulfilling its role. We need to display flexibility in our national position and invest the political capital necessary to ensure that this deliberative disarmament machinery will fulfil its mandate.

Mr. Midttun (Norway): Let me first echo other speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at this year's session. We greatly appreciate your leadership in the preparatory process for the session.

Allow me to share some thoughts on how to move multilateral disarmament from a long-time standstill to concrete action. Our common goal, as reiterated by President Obama in Berlin last year, is a world free of nuclear weapons. However, without a coherent and realistic approach, the goal might prove to be extremely distant.

Although not a specific topic for this UNDC session, let me refer to the ongoing efforts to dismantle, transport and ultimately destroy the Syrian chemical weapons arsenal. Much work is still to be done, yet we have already learned lessons that might prove beneficial to our efforts to reduce both the number and influence of other weapons of mass destruction. Jointly with Denmark, Norway is in the forefront of transporting the chemical agents out of Syria. We took on the task not least because we have an obligation to do our share in reducing the number of weapons of mass destruction

and ensuring that they are never again used against the Syrian population, or any other. Costs notwithstanding, this is meaningful work. It is practical and effective.

The United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) are our foremost partners in these efforts through the joint mission. Operational cooperation is now very good. This is truly an innovative way of carrying out the task. Let me add, however, that all member countries have a responsibility to do their part in ensuring that this important disarmament operation will be concluded in a timely and effective manner.

The recent Nuclear Security Summit was a success, not least because of its hands-on approach, bringing decision-makers together in concrete case studies and exercises. It raised awareness by highlighting our common challenges and pointing the direction before us. Our leaders went home with a clear and realistic view of the tasks ahead.

A realistic and fact-based understanding was also the goal of the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo last year, where we looked carefully at the humanitarian impact of nuclear detonations. Mexico provided a follow-up conference this year, giving us an even broader understanding of the topic on the factual and expert levels. The prime task ahead of us now is to ensure a positive outcome of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, building on what was achieved in the 2010 action plan for nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Not least, we hope to see progress on the issue of the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

The ongoing negotiations between the P5+1 countries and Iran on the Iranian nuclear programme are promising. As challenging as the talks are, a long-term deal might be within reach. In parallel, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran have reached a framework agreement with a view to resolving all outstanding issues. Furthermore, the relevance of the Agency is proved by its role in verifying that parties to the intermediate agreement between the P5+1 and Iran abide by its terms. The IAEA will also play a central role in verifying a future long-term agreement.

Verification is essential to sustaining the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Norway maintains the need to universialize the comprehensive safeguards agreement and the additional protocol. However, verification is also key to any future arms reduction process. The international community needs assurances that what has been agreed to is actually carried through. Verification is the essence of transparency and confidence-building measures. It is in our interest to develop the verification tools and procedures needed, and thereby to prepare for the day when we reach new milestone agreements in arms control and arms reductions. Norway will continue to actively support the development of sound and trustworthy verification systems. The United Kingdom-Norway initiative, highlighted today by our United Kingdom colleague, is one good example of how to move that agenda forward.

Conventional arms control regimes are concrete tools for verification and information-sharing. They enhance confidence and trust on sunny days, paving the way for better understanding, and ultimately better decision-making, should a cloudy day emerge. Starting with the Helsinki process in the 1970s, there is an extensive track record in Europe benefitting from our conventional arms control regimes. Open Skies flights and Vienna Document inspections are conducted regularly, even now during times of crisis. As international relations develop and technology evolves, it is paramount to renew and adapt these regimes to the changing security environment. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe has served us well for many years. It is therefore important to strike a new balance that provides a formula for an effective regime for the decades to come as well.

As the examples I have given underscore, multilateral approaches to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament are essential. Multilateral organizations and initiatives outside traditional forums have a role to play both as stakeholders pushing the agenda and as verifiers on behalf of a concerned global community. However, those goals will be lost should we not be able to reinvent ourselves and the way we conduct our work. The impasse of the international disarmament machinery falls way short of expectations and needs. That is why we must do our utmost to reach a positive conclusion of this year's UNDC.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker inscribed on the list for this morning.

I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind them that the number of statements in the exercise of this right

is limited to two by a delegation. The first statement should be limited to 10 minutes and the second to 5 minutes.

Mr. Aho (United States of America): The United States would like to speak in response to some comments that were made in yesterday afternoon's meeting (see A/CN.10/PV.338) regarding North Korea. I will just make a few points that largely reiterate things that we have echoed in this forum before.

The paramount goal of United States policy remains the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in a peaceful manner. We will not accept North Korea as a nuclear-armed State. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea committed on numerous occasions, including in the September 2005 Joint Statement issued at the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks, to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. We will continue to hold the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to those commitments and its international obligations. We have long made clear that the United States remains open to authentic and credible negotiations to implement the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005 and to bring North Korea into compliance with applicable Security Council resolutions through irreversible steps leading to denuclearization. But the onus is on North Korea to first take meaningful actions towards denuclearization.

Finally, North Korea's nuclear programmes will not make the country more secure. The only way for North Korea to achieve the security and prosperity it seeks is by complying with its international obligations and commitments, including to denuclearize and to refrain from further provocations.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I carefully followed the remarks made by the representatives of the United States and France concerning so-called provocations from 2013 to 2014 related to the rhetoric of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In that regard, let me first touch on the matter of the remarks made by the representative of France.

I want to ask one very simple question. The representative of France referred to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea actions as a provocation. What about the United States, which has engaged in nuclear blackmail over six decades, starting with the 1950 Korean War? Yesterday (see A/CN.10/PV.338), I touched on the issue of reunions of families separated because of the nuclear blackmail initiated by General MacArthur and President Truman of the United States, affecting 10 million separated families. I want to give examples.

First, at the time of the Korean War, these policymakers made a decision to drop nuclear weapons on the civilian population, as they did on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, barely five years after committing those crimes of genocide. Was that act not provocation?

Secondly, on the reconciliation proposals, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea National Defence Commission made very serious reconciliation proposals that included halting joint hostile military acts. We went so far as to suggest that if the military exercises were such valuable exercises they could be undertaken, but not on our land — not on the Korean peninsula but on the United States' own land. They should not be done at our doorstep. Is not the fact that the United States simply ignored our proposal another provocation?

Thirdly, the United States began deploying in South Korea B-52 bombers capable of carrying a nuclear bomb. That was done at a time when the North and South of Korea were holding a dialogue concerning the issue of separated family reunions. But the United States made a very serious provocation in the eyes of our fellow countrymen of the Korean peninsula and of the international community. Is that not provocation?

Finally, the United States launched joint military drills while the separated family reunions were being held in Mount Kumgang/Diamond Mountain. So I want the representative of France to give a frank and open answer.

As for the remarks made by the representative of the United States, he touched first upon the Joint Statement of 19 September and the fact that the United States will not recognize the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a nuclear-weapon State. We do not care whether the United States recognizes it or not — the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a nuclear-weapon State.

The representative of the United States gave the wrong impression that the Joint Statement of 19 September contains only the commitments of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I recommend that he carefully study the elements of the commitments. The two key players — the United States and the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea — have shared commitments. The United States is the perpetrator of nuclear blackmail against nationals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and fellow countrymen of the Korean peninsula, and the Joint Statement is a commitment to not carry out a hostile policy against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to give up nuclear blackmail against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is a written commitment.

The United States has never honoured the commitment, but has instead listed the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as part of the axis of evil. Secretary of State Kerry recently designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as an evil country. He made evil remarks against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by naming the Democratic People's Republic of Korea an evil country. So I recommend that he carefully study the content of his words.

Furthermore, the representative of the United States talked about our compliance with Security Council resolutions, which we have totally rejected. We have never recognized them. They are a manipulation of the veto power of the United States as a so-called permanent member of the Security Council. One such resolution raised the issue of our satellite launch, and we therefore had no option but to show our determination and readiness to defend our sovereignty, as a sovereign State, and to fully exercise our right as State party to the Outer Space Treaty. The United States has no right to block our exercise, so therefore the resolution is totally illegal and absolute nonsense. The United States is the one that should be punished under the Security Council resolutions and should be held more accountable than anybody else.

Concerning the question of the prosperity of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with nuclear weapons, the United States does not need to worry about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's prosperity. The United States has imposed heinous pressure over six decades through sanctions. It has imposed over 40 different kinds of sanctions on the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea since 1945, when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded. That has only made the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea even more determined and more united around their leadership. Nuclear deterrence will make our strong country prosperous and very powerful. So once again I tell the representative of the United States not to worry about the prosperity of our people.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

United Nations A/CN.10/PV.340

General Assembly

Official Records

Disarmament Commission

340th meeting

Tuesday, 8 April 2014, 3 p.m.

New York

Chair: Mr. Drobnjak ..... (Croatia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

The Chair: I would urge those delegations that have not yet done so to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible, as we plan to conclude the general exchange of views today at 6 p.m.

Mr. Yennimatas (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. First of all, allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for 2014, as well as the members of the Bureau on their election. The EU looks forward to working closely with you, Mr. Chair, to achieve a successful outcome of the current session. We look forward to continued discussion on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and on practical confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the field of conventional weapons.

The EU continues to regard the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. In view of current proliferation risks, we are convinced that today the NPT is more important than ever. We must strengthen its authority and integrity. We reaffirm our full support for all three pillars of the Treaty. Upholding the NPT remains our priority. The EU emphasizes the importance of universalizing the NPT and calls on all States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and, pending their accession to the Treaty, to adhere to its terms and pledge commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and its entry into force and universalization remain top priorities for the European Union. We welcome the final declaration adopted on 27 September 2013 at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT and underline the importance of the implementation of the concrete measures that were identified in it.

For the European Union, the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of document CD/1299 remains another clear priority. It is urgent and important as an essential step to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the NPT. We call on all States possessing nuclear weapons to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts, which is meeting right now in Geneva to advance discussions on that important issue.

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Last year, several initiatives were adopted through resolutions in the General Assembly concerning nuclear disarmament, including one to convene a follow-up to the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) under resolution 68/32 and other concerning the Open-ended Working Group under resolution 68/46. Member States of the EU gave their respective positions on those resolutions through explanations of vote (see A/68/PV.60).

We warmly welcome the adoption of the landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the General Assembly. The EU has always been a staunch supporter of the Treaty. The Treaty establishes robust and effective common international standards for regulating or improving the regulation of international trade in conventional arms and provides a new multilateral framework for transparency and accountability in that trade. The Treaty will help prevent arms from reaching those who fuel instability and conflict, commit atrocities and violate human rights and international humanitarian law. When effectively and globally implemented, the ATT will contribute to more responsible and transparent international arms transfers as well as more effective export controls. We look forward to the Treaty's early entry into force.

By signing and ratifying the Treaty, States can sustain the international momentum generated by the ATT. Seventeen EU member States deposited their instruments of ratification last week, on the first anniversary of the adoption of the Treaty. The remaining EU member States will do so soon, as their national ratification procedures are well under way. Member States of the EU will thereby contribute significantly to reaching the threshold of the 50 ratifications needed for the Treaty's entry into force. The EU, for its part, intends to make its own contribution, including through the implementation of European Council decision 2013/768/CFSP, adopted on 16 December 2013, on EU activities in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty by third countries in the framework of the European Security Strategy.

The EU welcomes the adoption, on 26 September 2013, of Security Council resolution 2117 (2013), the first-ever resolution adopted by the Security Council on the issue of small arms and light weapons. The EU remains convinced that efforts to better control small arms and light weapons have to be intensified, in particular in those areas where significant obstacles to full implementation persist. We believe that those areas include the issue of the diversion of small arms and light weapons, stockpile management, stockpile security and stockpile destruction, marking and tracing, the integration of ammunition and the gender perspective, as well as the need to better address the humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The EU remains strongly committed to the effective implementation of the International Tracing Instrument. In that context, the EU looks forward to substantive discussions at the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We intend to continue to make an active contribution to the process, including by submitting an EU working paper.

We also wish to remind Committee members of the EU working paper on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons presented in Working Group II of the United Nations Disarmament Commission during last year's session. We remain committed to the goals of confidence-building measures aimed at strengthening international peace and security, improving relations among States and contributing to the prevention of war. In our view, practical CBMs in the field of conventional weapons should, inter alia, include exchanges of information on national legislation, regulations and procedures on the transfer of arms, military equipment, dual-use goods and technology, including small arms and light weapons as a separate category in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, transparency in the field of military expenditure and CBMs at the regional and subregional levels.

In conclusion, we would like to wish you every success in the work of this session, Mr. Chair, and reiterate the full support of the European Union.

Mr. Al-Hajri (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Arab Group. We express our sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2014 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and to members of the Bureau. We are confident that, with your experience and perspicacity, you will successfully lead our work, in the last year of the cycle, towards recommendations that take into consideration the concerns of all Member States.

The Arab Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

While the Arab Group emphasizes that this multilateral United Nations forum provides the only sustainable way to deal with issues of disarmament and international security, the Arab Group expresses its concern that the Commission has not been active since 2000 and has not reached any agreements with regard to recommendations on disarmament. The Arab Group calls on all Member States to implement their collective and individual commitments and to cooperate actively in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Arab Group believes in the important role played by the Disarmament Commission as the only deliberative organ mandated to present recommendations related to issues of disarmament. The Arab Group expresses its concern that the Conference on Disarmament has also faced an impasse for the past two decades as a result of the lack of political will, including the lack of recommendations for, and the lack of an agreement on, a comprehensive agreement on nuclear weapons. The Group welcomes the efforts to break that deadlock and the success in that regard achieved by the representative of Iraq while leading the Conference on Disarmament in August 2013, as well as the adoption by the Conference of the proposal to establish an informal working group to produce a programme of work for the Conference.

In order that the Commission can fulfil its objectives, the Arab Group calls on Member States to demonstrate sincere political will to strengthening disarmament, including by making recommendations to achieve the objectives of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Arab Group is aware that, although nuclear disarmament was the first priority that was agreed upon at the tenth special session of the General Assembly of 1978, it has not been fully reflected in the work of the multinational Disarmament Commission. The Arab Group welcomes the support for the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), which was held in New York on 26 September 2013, and for resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament". In that respect, the Arab Group expresses its hope that Working Group I will present practical proposals and ideas that contribute to progress towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame and the achievement of a comprehensive agreement on nuclear weapons.

The Arab Group calls for the establishment of zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East as one of its priorities. In that connection, it underscores the fact that all parties should abide by the deadlines set out in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to hold the 2012 conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as soon as possible before the end of this year. The Arab Group emphasizes that the postponement of the 2012 Conference can be ascribed to Israel's refusal to abide by and comply with the international consensus and its insistence on possessing nuclear weapons. In that respect, we welcome the initiative proposed by the Arab Republic of Egypt on 28 September 2013, before the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, which included tangible steps to support regional and international efforts on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone and a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It also supports the letters that the States members of the League of Arab States and Iran addressed to the Secretary-General, as contained in document A/68/781, which emphasize their support for declaring the Middle East a region free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

While the Arab Group follows closely the developments in that respect, it emphasizes that the non-implementation of the Middle East resolution of 1995 and the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons constitutes a violation of the Treaty regime and affects the Treaty's credibility and reflects negatively on the success of the forthcoming Review Conference in 2015.

The Arab Group presents those priorities with regard to the issues before this substantive session of the Commission and is quite aware of the difficult tasks that face us all. Yet that should not stop us from seeking to realize our desired objectives during this session and, indeed, makes us intensify all our efforts in order to reach constructive recommendations and results that could lead to progress on issues related to comprehensive disarmament so that we may achieve the goal of a world of peace and security.

Mr. Wensley (South Africa): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on assuming your position as Chair of the 2014 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We also wish to extend our congratulations to the members of the Bureau and the Working Group Chairs on their assumption of their duties. We assure you, Sir, of South Africa's full support.

South Africa wishes to align itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group, respectively (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

Multilateralism and multilateral diplomacy remain at the core of our efforts to find lasting solutions to the challenges that we face in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. That is why we believe it is important that the Disarmament Commission, as the sole deliberative body of the multilateral disarmament machinery, agree to a set of concrete recommendations on its two agenda items in this, the final substantive session of its current three-year cycle. Failure to do so would serve only to further undermine the multilateral disarmament machinery, thereby adversely affecting international peace and security.

With regard to the agenda item on achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, my delegation wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). As the NPT is the only legally binding international instrument that establishes a universal norm against the further proliferation of nuclear weapons and is a legally binding commitment to nuclear disarmament and a reaffirmation of the inalienable right of States to pursue nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, we remain committed to promoting full compliance with all its provisions and their universal application.

While we welcome the significant progress that has been made towards realizing the non-proliferation objectives of the Treaty, we continue to be concerned about the lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament in fulfilment of article VI of the Treaty, particularly following the unequivocal undertakings made towards nuclear disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States at successive Review Conferences. Non-compliance with article VI obligations and the lack of implementation of the concrete steps agreed to during Review Conferences undermines the NPT as the foundation of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime.

South Africa continues to believe that the potential catastrophic impact of nuclear weapons poses a serious threat to humankind. That is why we have emphasized the humanitarian impact and the inherent threats and risks posed by the possession, use and threat of use and proliferation of those weapons. In that context, South Africa was one of the 146 States that participated in the second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Mexico in February. The Conference provided a clear recognition that humanitarian considerations remain a fundamental and global concern that must be at the core of all deliberations on nuclear weapons.

South Africa also attaches particular importance to the first ever General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, held on 26 September 2013 (see A/68/PV.11). Again, that event was a strong expression of support for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a view to contributing in a practical manner to international peace and security.

We wish to reiterate the points made by those who spoke on behalf of NAM and the African Group that resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament", is an appropriate framework for pursuing the principled objective of nuclear disarmament. It is an anomaly that, while biological and chemical weapons have been subject to internationally legally binding instruments banning their production, use and stockpiling, and providing for their destruction given their indiscriminate nature and the unacceptable harm that these inhumane weapons cause, nuclear weapons have yet to be subject to a similar prohibition.

South Africa is pleased to be part of the African zone free of nuclear weapons and continues to support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world, including in the Middle East. We express our profound disappointment at the delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and on the decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on convening a conference in 2012 to be attended by the States of the region. It remains our hope that the conference will be convened as a matter of urgency and without further delay.

South Africa looks forward to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, which will commence immediately following this substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. It is imperative that we continue to lay the

groundwork for the 2015 Review Conference to monitor th · compliance by all States parties of the commitments they undertook in the 2010 Review Conference action plan, including those by the nuclear-weapon States to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament.

With regard to the agenda item on practical confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the field of conventional weapons, there was an opportunity last year for the Group of Governmental Experts to review the operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its possible further expansion. South Africa was particularly honoured to Chair the Group. While there was a thorough consideration by the Group of the decline in participation in the instrument, South Africa was disappointed that no progress could be made on the possible expansion of the Register.

Some have argued that the United Nations Register is not so much a confidence-building measure as it is a voluntary transparency measure. However, that argument is flawed, as the terms "transparency" and "confidence-building measure" are synonymous when it comes to conventional arms control and international security. Nonetheless, Member States need to take cognizance of recent international developments and of the need for the instrument to remain relevant to conventional arms CBMs. In my delegation's view, the United Nations Register remains at the heart of our discussion of the agenda item.

There is no denying that the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the General Assembly a year ago has changed the landscape of the conventional arms control debate. The Treaty is fast nearing entry into force. The President of South Africa signed the ATT in September last year, and our domestic ratification process is in motion. The principle objective of the ATT is to establish the highest possible common international standards on the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms, which is the noble ideal that we should all aspire to. Under the ATT, States parties will be required to take a number of concrete steps at their respective national levels, thereby further ennancing practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

As for the issue of addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, South Africa continues to co-author, along with Colombia and Japan, the annual so-called omnibus small arms and light weapons draft resolution. We underscore the importance of the outcome document of the successfully concluded second Review Conference on the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and look forward to a successful fifth Biennial Meeting of States on the implementation of the Programme of Action in June this year.

We believe that, together with the practical measures set out in the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and through the regular submission of national reports, that also contributes to building confidence amongst States in the field of conventional arms.

In conclusion, the United Nations Disarmament Commission has faced the challenge of not being able to make any progress for several years now. We hope that all delegations are able to display the political will needed and that we may be able to make real progress during the current session.

Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal): Allow me to add my voice to those of others in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for 2014, as well as the members of the Bureau on their election. I am confident that with your wisdom and experience, Mr. Chair, you will be able to steer our deliberations to a successful conclusion, for which my delegation pledges its full cooperation. Allow me also to put on the record our sincere appreciation for Ambassador Christopher Grima, Permanent Representative of Malta, for his tireless efforts as Chair of the Commissi· n last year. I also thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson for his remarks before the Commission yesterday.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Commission has a history of many concrete achievements, made possible through its consensus principles, guidelines and recommendations on a range of critical issues. However, it has been unable to deliver any tangible results for the past 14 years. That failure is not in keeping with the purpose of a subsidiary body of the General Assembly as important as the Commission. Nepal understands that only an effective Commission can make the significant contributions to the noble goal of the United Nations —maintaining international peace and security — envisaged for it. My delegation therefore continues to view the work of the

Commission, as the sole deliberative body in the system of multilateral disarmament machinery, as extremely important.

With its unwavering commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, Nepal believes strongly in the general, complete and speedy disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction. Nepal is an active participant in the international disarmament campaign aimed at prohibiting the proliferation around the world of all weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, chemical, biological and radiological — and of conventional weapons as well. As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention, and as a signatory of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, Nepal is a firm advocate and promoter of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

We strongly oppose the weaponization of outer space and support the establishment of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones as critical steps forward that can give disarmament genuine meaning. We condemn the use of chemical weapons anywhere and welcome recent developments with regard to safeguarding the Middle East region.

Nepal notes with concern that the production, transfer and trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, has increased many times in recent years. In that connection, while maintaining that every nation has a legitimate right to acquire small arms and light weapons for self-defence, Nepal strongly supports non-proliferation of such arms and weapons.

Nepal believes that all three pillars of nuclear disarmament — disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy — are equally important and mutually reinforcing, and that their sanctity should continue to be preserved as such. As set forth in the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the ultimate objective of the international community should be the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

It has fallen to the United Nations system to play the central role of a truly global, multilateral forum for maintaining international peace and security. To that end, it should make full use of all its related organs and entities — the General Assembly, the Security Council and other bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission — by which Member States can find a shared approach to the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the convening of the first-ever General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament last September, which witnessed high-level participation and strong expressions of support for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, and emphasized the importance of nuclear disarmament to international peace and security.

My delegation feels that confidence-building measures, particularly those undertaken under the aegis of the United Nations and other multilateral processes, can be instrumental in promoting transparency and understanding among stakeholders, reducing tensions and mitigating the threat of conventional weapons, particularly in conflict zones, and fostering a general environment conducive to international peace and security. Likewise, regional mechanisms can complement global-level efforts by creating a climate of effective collaboration among regional stakeholders. It is, however, important that confidence-building measures, irrespective of who undertakes and implements them, take into account countries' and regions' specific conditions.

As host to the United nations Asia-Pacific Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, Nepal is convinced that such regional mechanisms could play a far greater complementary role than they do at present in promoting the global peace and disarmament agenda in their various regions. Nepal believes that such regional centres could also be instrumental in taking a consciousness of disarmament and non-proliferation to a wider audience of students and ordinary people, including through education such as is being championed by the Kathmandu Centre. I urge that the centres be well resourced and strengthened, encouraged to share experiences and best practices among themselves and used to the fullest.

Nepal attaches high importance to multilateral negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation with a view to promoting collective ownership, deliberations and responsibility for collective global action. The time has come to broaden and deepen collaboration among States in building the confidence, fostering the trust

and promoting the stability that will enable them to save precious resources for developing global commons.

In conclusion, Nepal believes that the possession of weapons of mass destruction does not guarantee State security. If global peace, security and prosperity are our shared objectives, we, the Member States, must commit to nurturing those shared objectives through consensus-building. We must demonstrate the collective political will and strength to take the responsibility of making the Commission a truly consensus-generating body and enabling it to submit concrete recommendations to the General Assembly on creating a safer planet for ourselves and generations to come.

Nepal believes that, as we approach the end of the three-year cycle of the Commission's session, the international community cannot afford to waste yet another opportunity for working with a sense of unity and responsibility. It is in that spirit that my delegation looks forward to working closely with all to make this session a success and pave the way for constructive engagement in the run-up to the upcoming NPT Review Conference in 2015.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey): At the outset, Sir, I would like to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election. I would like to assure you that you will have our full cooperation. We would also like to take this opportunity to support the re-election of the members of the Working Groups.

Turkey, bilaterally and through multilateral platforms and initiatives, continues to work to advance the goals of complete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We believe that the discussions at the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, held in September, were very valuable in that regard.

Turkey continues to see the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of disarmament and nonproliferation efforts. Equal and balanced treatment of its three mutually reinforcing pillars, as well as the Treaty's universalization, will solidify the integrity and credibility of the NPT regime. We should do our utmost to implement the 2010 NPT Review Conference action plan. In that context, I would like to underline our commitment to holding an international conference on establishing the Middle East zone free of all weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. The international community, in particular the conveners of that conference, should spare no effort to organize it as soon as possible. We should not turn a blind eye to its impact on the success of the NPT review cycle.

Furthermore, the Conference on Disarmament must be revitalized in order to enable it to reassume its unique role. Turkey believes the Conference possesses the mandate, membership and rules of procedure that it needs to effectively discharge its duties. We also look forward to the immediate start and early conclusion of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

We stress the importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and encourage all States to ratify it as soon as possible.

Turkey will also continue to support mechanisms designed to prevent WMD material from falling into the wrong hands and to ensure nuclear safety and security, such as the Nuclear Security Summit process, which has just completed its third fruitful meeting. Needless to say, Turkey also fully supports Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). To date we have submitted national reports and matrices on more than one occasion. We are now working on updating our national report and matrix, with a view to submitting it to the Committee as soon as possible.

Every State has the legitimate right to manufacture, import, export, transfer and retain conventional arms for its national defence and security, but we need to pay more attention to the adverse effects of such weapons. The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Marking and Tracing Instrument are important contributions to our efforts to fight those adverse effects. We look forward to the substantive discussions at the upcoming fifth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms, with a view to ensuring their full and effective implementation.

Maintaining effective export controls is without doubt essential in strengthening international security and curbing illicit proliferation activities. Turkey is party to all international export control regimes and wishes to see the universalization and effective implementation of those instruments. It is a known fact that the most practical means of combatting proliferation remains effective export controls implemented by the producer or the exporting countries.

Confidence-building measures (CBMs), on the other hand, make an important contribution to peace and security at global, regional and local levels, which are key to providing a better future for our populations. CBMs, by their voluntary nature, promote mutual understanding and cooperation, and therefore make an important contribution to the peaceful resolution of disputes and other principles of the United Nations Charter, including territorial integrity.

In that context, I would like to stress the importance of transparency. We value and support instruments such as the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, and support the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as a mandatory category of the Register.

We were therefore heartened by the conclusion of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which has important provisions in that regard, along with others, including on export controls. The ATT is a momentous achievement and we look forward to its universalization and implementation in good faith.

Before I conclude my remarks, I would like to turn to our work here at the United Nations Disarmament Commission. The Commission was established as a deliberative body to support our efforts in other forums. Over the years, the Commission has successfully formulated consensus principles, guidelines and recommendations on a number of subjects.

Even though the deliberations during this substantive sessions of Disarmament Commission have been useful, if we are not able to agree on recommendations again this year, it will be the fifteenth year of work without concrete outcomes. It will mean that we have worked tirelessly for 45 weeks — in other words 10 months — without concretely justifying the body's relevance.

It is therefore paramount that we agree on recommendations this year. That can be achieved only by showing sufficienet flexibility and will, abandoning maximalist approaches and keeping in mind the body's deliberative nature, whereby its recommendations are not binding.

Mr. Al-Kuwari (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2014 substantive session. We also congratulate the members of the Bureau. We are fully confident that, with your experience, you will guide us to success in our work.

We endorse the statements by the representative of Oman on behalf of the Arab Group and the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

This meeting is taking place following the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held on 26 September. We welcome the High-level Meeting, which we consider to be evidence of the international community's growing commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament. However, despite that note of optimism, we should not forget that the international disarmament regime in general terms, and nuclear disarmament in particular, experienced a setback in 2012 when the depositaries of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) showed themselves to be incapable of holding a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East.

The deliberations in the Disarmament Commission have not led to progress since 1999. No tangible progress has been made in the area of nuclear disarmament since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which took place in 1978. That raises many questions concerning the justification for the annual meetings if we do not have a minimum threshhold of objectives to be achieved following each session. We also draw attention to the fact that the goal of the meetings of the Commission is not to merely meet, but rather to achieve results and agree on tangible recommendations on how to take a qualitative step forward in the area of non-proliferation through consensus, which would make it possible to arrive at a treaty for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

I would therefore like to express Qatar's concerns about the inertia within the Disarmament Commission since 1996 owing to the lack of political will, even for the purpose of establishing a programme of work for the Conference.

Among the results of the 2010 NPT Review Conference we note the adoption of a resolution setting out a road map for the implementation of the resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT. At that time, the resolution was a condition for the signing of the Treaty. Among the stages that were defined

at the time, the Secretary-General was entrusted as depositary of the NPT, and the countries of the region with defining a host country, a coordinator and a date for the holding of the conference. Nevertheless and despite the efforts made by the Arab countries, as well as by other international parties for the holding of that conference on the date scheduled, the conference was not held owing to the refusal of a single State to ensure the holding of the conference for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In that regard, we would like to reaffirm that establishing such a zone in the Middle East is inconceivable unless Israel adheres to the NPT. We therefore affirm the Arab Group's position with regard to the need for Israel to accede to the NPT and to submit its nuclear arsenals to comprehensive safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

If nuclear-weapon-States were serious about strengthening the disarmament system, the ways to achieve that are perfectly clear, namely, by taking tangible and serious steps towards nuclear disarmament and by prohibiting nuclear tests. Nuclear-weapon States that are still not signatories to the NPT have been called upon to adhere to the Treaty, and those that have yet to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty should do so. The Treaty has still not been implemented because eight States have still failed to ratify it.

The State of Qatar attaches great importance to strengthening the NPT and to bolstering the pillars on which the NPT is based, namely, disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Within that framework, we should like to reaffirm our satisfaction about the Egypt's initiative at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly to take practical steps to strengthen international and regional efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Furthermore, we welcome the letters sent to the Secretary-General by Arab States and Iran supporting Egypt's initiative (see A/68/781). We reaffirm the position of the Arab Group with regard to the holding of a conference in 2012 to establish a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East as soon as possible and to set a new date for the holding of that conference. We would like to draw attention to the fact that the delays in setting the date fo; the conference have led to suspicions about nuclear-weapon State's good faith in establishing such a zone in the Middle East. That will have a negative impact on the NPT regime and on non-proliferation in general.

Ms. Street (Australia): Mr. Chair, may I congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) for the year 2014. Australia is pleased to see you chairing the Commission, Sir, and you can be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

As you said yesterday, Mr. Chair, we have important work ahead of us. The UNDC is at a critical juncture, having failed to reach an agreed outcome for 15 years. Its credibility and relevance are at stake. While high levels of ambition are always important, sometimes we must also be realistic and content with incremental progress. In that regard, we agree with the view expressed by the representatives of some other delegations that, for the UNDC this year, modest consensus recommendations are preferable to no outcome at all.

Australia continues to give top priority to taking forward the non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. The past 12 months have seen increased international interest in this area. Australia has engaged actively in all key events on the calendar, including the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Article XIV Meeting, the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons hosted by Mexico and, naturally, the recent Nuclear Security Summit. Australia has also participated in the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament and the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects of a long-overdue fissile material cut-off treaty, which is currently under way in Geneva.

In the current climate of heightened international interest in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Australia believes the UNDC can and should play a constructive role. This session of the UNDC comes just ahead of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Through our deliberations over the next three weeks, we can help foster the environment necessary for focused and productive discussions at that session on the implementation of the Treaty, which, for Australia, remains the cornerstone of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

The good health of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and a successful Review Conference in 2015 should be the

primary goal for the majority of us. The implementation of the 2010 action plan is essential for taking us further towards our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons. The recent conferences in Norway and Mexico that highlighted the devastating humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons demonstrated all too plainly why we must continue our work towards that goal.

We must find practical and realistic ways to achieve nuclear disarmament. We must do that together, acknowledging that progress on nuclear disarmament most readily occurs in an atmosphere of trust — an atmosphere conducive to transparency and to building the political will to turn away from nuclear weapons. The reality is that there is no short-cut to nuclear disarmament. We need to work hard and we need to work methodically, building block by building block, if we are going to begin to disarm the world.

Australia and fellow-members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) have been working in advance of the NPT Preparatory Committee session to propose practical steps that can contribute to greater nuclear transparency, further reductions in arsenals, de-alerting, the holding of a conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, article X withdrawal and greater security of nuclear weapons and material. The NPDI's positions on many of those issues will be finalized at the NDPI ministerial meeting in Hiroshima on 11 and 12 April, and we look forward to sharing them with delegations at the Preparatory Committee session later this month.

For Australia, the next logical step in the disarmament process is a fissile material cutoff treaty. We can never reach our shared objective of a world free of nuclear weapons — and we cannot maintain such a world — without having negotiated stringent controls relating to fissile material for weapons purposes. The Group of Governmental Experts presents the best opportunity since the negotiation of the Shannon Mandate for us to explore in a multilateral context the broad range of ingredients that would go into a Treaty. Importantly, the Group will also help take the 2010 Review Conference agenda forward and bring fresh impetus to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, which, like the UNDC, has fallen on hard times.

Another concrete step towards nuclear disarmament would be the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The CTBT is more than a practical commitment not to test nuclear weapons, it is symbolic of a broader undertaking to prevent their further development. Australia welcomes the declaration by some States yet to ratify the CTBT of a moratorium on their nuclear testing, but continues to call on all nuclear weapon possessors and other annex 2 countries that have not yet ratified the Treaty to do so.

Clearly, there are still gaps in the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Australia acknowledges the role of regional initiatives in providing a complementary focus, strengthening global efforts and addressing specific regional concerns and insecurities. Australia strongly supports the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and ongoing efforts to convene a conference at the earliest opportunity. We call upon all States in the Middle East to engage in a spirit of genuine and constructive cooperation to make that happen.

As noted by Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson yesterday (see A/CN.10/PV.337), 2013 was a successful year for the international disarmament community, and the UNDC should find a way to build on that success. Indeed, the past 12 months have been particularly productive in advancing global action on conventional weapons control, with, for example, the General Assembly's adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), of which Australia was one of the authors, by an overwhelming majority of States. The Security Council's adoption, on 26 September 2013, of resolution 2117 (2013) put forward by Australia to strengthen international action to combat the illicit trade and misuse of small arms and light weapons was also a milestone in this area and built on the ATT, the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the International Tracing Instrument.

Australia's commitment to the ATT remains as strong as ever. With entry into force just around the corner, our attention must now turn to the Treaty's effective implementation. For its part, Australia is continuing to provide support to those countries most affected by the uncontrolled spread of conventional arms, through the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation. Australia is pleased to be working alongside the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the other Facility donors to assist States to implement both the ATT and the Programme of Action. Australia calls on others to contribute generously to this promising new Facility.

The Australian delegation looks forward to the forthcoming UNDC discussions on confidence-building measures that will support the effective implementation of the ATT and the Programme of Action. We also hope that our discussions here will lay the groundwork for a successful fifth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action, to be held in June — a meeting that advances the agenda and moves us forward towards our ultimate goal of saving as many lives as possible.

Four days ago, on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, the international community was reminded of the horrific impact on civilians of anti-personnel mines. Australia urges the continued harnessing of national and international assistance and cooperation and the full and effective implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Australia is pleased to have now become a State party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and encourages continued momentum on universalization of those two important instruments, which seek to reduce the horrendous damage caused by those deadly weapons.

As the Chair correctly noted yesterday, the UNDC has produced valuable outcomes in the past and it can do so again. Our discussions over the coming weeks will provide an opportunity for us all to engage substantively to help the UNDC break the impasse. We call on all delegations and individuals to demonstrate flexibility and creativity to achieve that goal and to set the UNDC back on its rightful path.

Mr. Koller-Lenhardt (Austria): Following the excellent stewardship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission during the past two years by the representatives of Peru and Malta, respectively, the Commission is now privileged to have you, Sir, chairing it during its last stage of the current triennial cycle.

After 15 years of extensive deliberations, it is time for the Disarmament Commission to fulfil its mandate set out in paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) by agreeing on recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly. In view of current achievements and developments on disarmament issues in other forums, a substantive outcome in both Working Groups is not only desirable but realizable. The Commission should therefore focus on the consolidation of the common denominator emerging from our collective deliberations over the years, so that a substantive outcome can be agreed upon by consensus at the end of the current session.

Austria is in full alignment with the statement delivered previously by the observer of Greece on behalf of the European Union. However, let me add a couple of remarks in our national capacity.

Austria remains fully committed to substantive progress in all relevant disarmament forums, in the context, inter alia, of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and especially the General Assembly under Article 11 of the Charter. Over the past five years, Austria has been encouraged by the vast support for the resolutions aimed at taking the disarmament agenda forward, ranging from resolution 64/64, on the report of the Conference on Disarmament, resolutions 65/93 and 66/66, on the revitalization of the CD, and resolutions 67/56 and 68/46, on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Last year, the Open-ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament convened in Geneva and clearly demonstrated that perceived cleavages on nuclear disarmament issues, often stemming from the artificial dichotomy between the incremental and the comprehensive approaches, could be addressed in a productive way through transparent, credible and trustful dialogue and a focus on shared objectives. The consensus report of the Group, with its array of suggestions on how to advance the multilateral nuclear disarmament agenda, has been forwarded by the Secretary-General to the Commission and should serve as a source of inspiration for our deliberations in Working Group I. Likewise, the summary of the High-level Meeting held in New York pursuant to resolution 67/39 (see A/68/PV.11) is another important document accurately reflecting the clear priority of the overwhelming majority of the membership for achieving progress on nuclear disarmament, in particular with respect to the humanitarian imperative for nuclear disarmament.

Towards the end of this year in Vienna, Austria will host the third International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. For us, nuclear disarmament is a global task and a collective responsibility, as expressly reflected in article VI of the NPT. Having facilitated the action plan on nuclear disarmament at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Austria considers the full and swift compliance with article VI of the NPT to be of the utmost importance.

International nuclear disarmament efforts require an urgent paradigm shift, not least in the light of the danger of further nuclear-weapon proliferation, which can ultimately be prevented only in conjunction with credible and irreversible nuclear disarmament. In Austria's view, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is among the key drivers of proliferation and collective insecurity, whereas the focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons promotes the paramount concept of human security at large. The growing international awareness of the devastating humanitarian impact and consequences of nuclear weapons has a positive effect on international discussions and is resulting in greater understanding of the need to eliminate that risk.

Yesterday, Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson referred in his remarks to the "growing global consensus on the existential consequences of the possible use of nuclear weapons" (see A/CN.10/PV.337). There is indeed overwhelming support to firmly anchor the humanitarian imperative in our discussions about nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. Austria looks forward to constructive participation in the discussions at the Vienna Conference that is commensurate with the urgency of achieving that shared objective.

While Austria fully acknowledges the inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy as reflected in article IV of the NPT, an Austrian constitutional law prohibits not only nuclear weapons, but also facilities with the purpose of obtaining energy by nuclear fission. The Austrian Government's current work programme reaffirms the commitment to our anti-nuclear power station policy, taking into account the principle of free choice of energy mix. That paramount principle was reconfirmed in resolution 66/288, which endorsed the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, recognizing that the activities of countries in broader energy-related matters are of great importance and are prioritized according to their specific challenges, capacities and circumstances, including their energy mix. Against that backdrop, it is evident that any formulation that might be construed as promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy for power generation in a generalized manner would be inconsistent with the aforementioned outcome reached at the highest political level. Moreover, as my delegation repeatedly stressed during the current triennial cycle, any discussions on that topic are to be conducted in the relevant forums as set out by the General Assembly, most notably in its resolution 1145 (XII), pertaining to the relationship between the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons are highly important tools to ease tensions among States and promote international peace and security. Austria welcomes the progress achieved so far in Working Group II and looks forward to further constructive deliberations. From our perspective, due attention should also be paid to ongoing efforts aimed at curbing the use of explosive weapons in populated areas to protect civilian populations. In that context, let me re-emphasize the importance Austria attaches to the conventions prohibiting anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions.

Regulating the international trade in arms is not only important from a rule of law perspective, but also in terms of building confidence in that area. Austria therefore looks forward to the rapid entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty and envisages depositing its instrument of ratification before summer.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our conviction that our mandate can be fulfilled by focusing in both Working Groups on a consolidation of those elements that are conducive to consensus. In that regard, Austria particularly appreciates that the Chairs of both Working Groups issued consolidated drafts in the period between the sessions for further consideration by the membership.

Let me assure you, Mr. Chair, that Austria, which is also as one of the Vice-Chairs of the Commission, looks forward to constructively engaging with all delegations in order to reach a substantive outcome at the conclusion of this triennial cycle.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): Let me commend you, Mr. Chair, on your energy and patience in sitting through the deliberations all day. On behalf of my delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, and the entire Bureau on your election. My delegation also expresses its appreciation to the Chairs of the two Working Groups for their efforts during the 2013 session, as well as their pledge to continue their useful facilitation at the 2014 session. We also wish to thank Ambassador Christopher Grima of Malta for his leadership and contributions to advancing the work of the Disarmament Commission at the 2013 session.

Nigeria also aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement by the

Permanent Representative of Indonesia and with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group (see A/CN.10/PV.337).

Nigeria underscores the importance of the Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized deliberative body of the United Nations that deals with the multilateral disarmament process. While noting its usefulness and recognizing its potential as the competent forum for discussing comprehensive nuclear disarmament, we wish to also state that the Commission needs to streamline and improve its working methods so as to achieve the desired objective for which it was established. The topmost priority of this body, we believe, is not only to address issues related to comprehensive nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but also to ensure that its deliberations include issues related to the protection of non-nuclear States against the threat or use of nuclear weapons by States possessing such weapons.

Nigeria strongly believes that the continued existence of nuclear weapons on our planet remains an existential threat to all humankind. As such, their development, possession and deployment clearly vitiate all agreed international human rights and humanitarian principles and international law. Their maintenance and modernization are not only prohibitively expensive, but also deplete scarce resources that could otherwise be used for the betterment of the world and for advancing other peaceful, wholesome and edifying human endeavours.

Nuclear weapons are, by definition, weapons of mass destruction. Humankind has lived on the edge for too long. It has repeatedly been demonstrated that nuclear weapons are inhumane and unacceptable weapons that should be taken off the list of global armaments.

In that regard, we recall the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in 1996 (see A/51/218), which could not have been clearer, on the illegality of nuclear weapons and their harmful impact on human history. It is important that we strive to achieve the end goal of the global process of comprehensive nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and halt a spiral descent into unnecessary chaos occasioned by an accidental or deliberate detonation of nuclear weapons.

Nigeria acceded to the Treaty of Pelindaba to demonstrate its commitment to a nuclear-free world, and to help rid humankind of the sword of Damocles that has been hanging over its head for over six decades now. It is in that spirit that Nigeria calls upon other Member States to support efforts to replicate the measure in the remaining parts of the world, including in the Middle East, where nuclear-weapon-free zones have not been established.

Nigeria also reiterates the need for the full implementation of the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle-East. Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT): nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation no doubt remain the ultimate goal, but we all need to significantly play constructive roles to ensure the remaining pillar, which is the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, is available to all States desirous of its use.

Taken together as one unit, the assurances and application of the three pillars of the NPT are measures that could actually save our world and benefit the whole of humankind. As we believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of those weapons, Nigeria will continue to support universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding security assurances to non-nuclear weapon States on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them under all circumstances.

One aspect of our deliberations during this session will focus on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, while the other aspect addresses practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. While the role of the Disarmament Commission in developing those concepts is well noted, the Commission should take it a step further by translating concepts into reality.

Nigeria believes that it is imperative to highlight the measures taken in recent times to address the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. My delegation commends the successful outcome of the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress

Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in September 2012.

A number of States in Africa are suffering from the illicit trade in that category of weapons, especially those on whose territories conflicts are taking place. We therefore call upon all States to support regional efforts aimed at addressing the menace of illicit small arms and light weapons, including the important component of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

My delegation strongly supports the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Nigeria signed and deposited its instrument of ratification on 12 August 2013, thereby becoming the third country to do so. We urge all States to ensure its entry into force and implementation. As the first legally binding global instrument to regulate the trade in conventional arms, the ATT could both prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms by preventing their diversion for unauthorized end use to unauthorized end-users and non-State actors. As a principle, its application by Member States could reduce human suffering, as well as contribute to international and regional peace, security, stability and development.

As you, Mr. Chair, continue to guide our deliberations at this session and as a confidence-building measure, we are hopeful that Working Group II, mandated to discuss portions of this historic landmark Treaty, will indeed highlight the need for continued elaboration of the usefulness of the ATT, even as we move towards its entry into force.

The question of anti-personnel land mines is one dear to my country and an area where the assistance of the United Nations Mine Action Service has remained important and commendable. We hope that fact will be accommodated in the final outcome of this session.

Nigeria wishes to highlight the efforts of United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in terms of their contributions to disarmament measures and other future challenges. My delegation notes the valuable input of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, particularly in the Centre's provision of capacity-building and technical assistance to many States in Africa.

Finally, Sir, be assured of the commitment of my delegation to constructively work towards fulfilling the mandate of the Disarmament Commission, as highlighted by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We hope Member States will demonstrate enough flexibility as we engage in deliberations in the coming days.

Mr. Pham Quang Hieu (Viet Nam): Let me begin by joining previous speakers in extending our congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2014 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as well as to the other Bureau members and the Chairs of the Working Groups. My delegation is convinced that, under your able leadership, this year's session will arrive at a successful outcome.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Desra Percaya of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

As we embark on our deliberations this year within the framework of the Disarmament Commission, the overall picture of disarmament affairs continues to provide us with solid ground for optimism for concrete results. Disarmament and arms control, although challenging, proved to be feasible with the adoption of General Assembly resolutions and the conclusion of a number of initiatives. The first-ever General Assembly High-level Meeting Devoted to Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) and its follow-up resolution 68/32 are a testament to our commitment to this important issue. A number of Working Groups produced several deliverables, including with regard to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations and negotiations on a fissile material treaty.

Greater effort will be required, however, to move us forward substantially on a number of core issues. Progress on issues such a convention on nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons remains elusive. Balance in the implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be addressed sufficiently. The multilateral disarmament machinery, especially the Conference on Disarmament, needs to be revitalized so as to fulfil its mandate. In that context, as we are at the end of the three-year cycle of the Disarmament Commission, a few key points, in our view, should be taken into account in our deliberations.

First, it is the collective and common responsibility of Member States to revitalize the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Together with and in complement to the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body, the Disarmament Commission serves as the central mechanism for disarmament success. The continued use of basic principles and practices, as consensually agreed at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and innovative ideas can and will provide a pertinent discourse conducive to further successes. In that sense, the Commission will indeed be of great use as the sole deliberative forum to which the international community has entrusted disarmament.

Secondly, our deliberations on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should bear in mind the need for balance among the three issues of disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of energy, especially as to prepare for the last session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Those deliberations must also emphasize the ..eed to take into account concerns of parties to the NPT, including the crucial issue of convening as soon as possible a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It would be also useful to emphasize the importance of the entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty without delay, as well as the role nuclear-weapons States in that regard. That should also go hand-in-hand with further progress on negative security assurances and the eventual conclusion of a convention on nuclear disarmament, the necessity of which has been visibly demonstrated by recent conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

Thirdly, in our deliberations on conventional weapons, it is critical to highlight the legitimate right to self-defence of States, and thus the right to import, maintain and produce conventional arms for legitimate defence and security needs. Any new initiative on disarmament and arms control on conventional arms should not undermine this critical principle. Confidence-building measures in this field depend on the nurturing of an international environment in which all States are committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes and the principle of the non-use of force in international relations. Only in such an environment would confidence-building measures be of concrete effectiveness.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our strong support to you, Mr. Chair, and our firm commitment to working together towards the ultimate success of this important session.

The Chairperson: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speamk in exercise of the right to reply.

Mr. Ibrahim (Syrian Arab Republic): I would like to refer to the unfounded allegations mentioned by the representative of the French regime this morning (see A/CN.10/PV.339). It seems that the hostile policy of his regime intends to falsify the reports of the investigation mission headed by Professor Åke Sellström, which did not attempt to identify the perpetrators of the heinous crime of using chemical weapons in Syria though the Syrian Government had asked the United Nations officially to mandate the mission to investigate the use of chemical weapons in Syria, starting with Khan Al-Assal near Aleppo, as well as to identify the perpetrators of that crime. In attempting to forge the findings of the mission's reports, the French representative is deliberately disregarding the many reports confirming that terrorist groups committed those horrible crimes. He is also being selective by choosing a single incident when the final report of the investigation mission mentions 16 incidents where chemical materials were used by terrorist groups against civilians and soldiers of the Syrian army. The French representative is also intentionally ignoring the progress in the process of eliminating the chemical weapons in Syria through the constructive cooperation between the Syrian Government and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations joint mission.

We would hope that the French regime and its delegation here in New York would seek to safeguard international peace and security as enshrined by the Charter of the United Nations and not to act as an agent of hostility, aggression and pro-terrorism, as their actions towards Syria show day after day.

The Chair: We have just completed the general exchange of views. The Chair wishes to thank all speakers for their words of support and good wishes. I took good note of all of the 45 statements. I am

encouraged by the readiness expressed to make this year's meeting of the United Nations Disarmament Commission a success. Of course, we will need a great deal of flexibility and creativity. But I have no doubt that we have the potential to do so.

One message that has dominated the debate is that we have not had a successful outcome for 15 years. We are all aware of thsy, so let us do our best in the coming days and weeks to make a difference.

Finally, I would like to remind all representatives that, in accordance with decision 45/492, the Chairs of the Working Groups are elected for three years. As we are all aware, the Chairs of both Working Groups, Ambassador Naif bin Bandar Al-Sudairy of Saudi Arabia and Mr. Knut Langeland of Norway, will continue to chair Working Group I and Working Group II, respectively.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Chairs every success in guiding the Working Groups to a productive outcome. I would also like to remind delegations that the meeting of Working Group I will begin tomorrow at 10 a.m. in this Conference Room. I thank everyone for their support and a good debate.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.